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THE SERAGLIO OF THE INCA

After the painting by J. L. Gérôme Ferris.

WOMAN

In all ages and in all countries

WOMEN OF AMERICA

by

JOHN ROUSE LARUS

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INTRODUCTION

THE present volume completes the story of woman as told in the series of which it forms part. The history of nations is, in its ultimate analysis, largely that of woman. Therefore this series in its wide inclusiveness forms a more than ordinarily interesting history. The present study of the women of America is innocent of theorizing or philosophy and from the nature of the subject the narrative takes the reader into paths generally unfamiliar in historic studies.

Of the North American aboriginal woman the knowledge possessed admits of but broad generalities as to her status and condition. The author of this volume has, however, happily extracted from the available sources what is informing as to the position of the woman so that a better conception of her will be the part of his readers. It will be seen that she has not always been the neglected and unconsidered creature that the popular mind has accepted. Instead, she has held among many tribes a higher place of power than man, and that by custom and in fact she was held in high consideration. The condition of the aboriginal woman before the advent of the white race was not that to which she fell as the consequence of that advent. In the present work notable instances in support of this view will be found. In considering the moral status and the customs of the aborigines it should be borne in mind that morality is standardized by nations or peoples

for themselves, and the morality of individuals must be measured by its relation to convention to this respect. In this connection the author concludes that the morality of the Indian woman is of at least average excellence. That contact with the white man arrested—or as the author maintains "degraded"—the progress of civilization, slow as that progress may have been among the aborigines, cannot be doubted, nor that there was "a reversion to a more barbarous type than had before been prevalent."

As we consider the principles of government among the North American tribes we find that the matriarchal system prevailed. The Salic Law, whether in its general or its restricted meaning, was little favored among them. If in the history of these people a Queen Esther stands forth as a cruel monster, did not proud Rome produce a Messalina? Or need we go beyond the records of a later date of the people of one of the most cultured nations of Europe? And yet Esther was among the foes, the despoilers of her people, while Messalina found her victims among her own people. It may not be amiss to recall the incident of Frances Slocum as an evidence that the life of woman among the Indians was not necessarily distasteful. Altogether, the author of this volume writes sympathetically of the vanishing Amerinds,—which in no way lessens the value of his study,—and furnishes many little known or hardly remembered anecdotes of their women, while his succinct descriptions of their polity and of the lot and place of woman among them is both highly entertaining and instructive.

The women of Mexico and South America furnish scanty material for the study of woman. Nevertheless, from the records of the Aztec civilization the author has abstracted the salient features of the life of their women. It will be seen that the Aztec woman enjoyed a higher

status than was attained by the woman of any other native American race. Her legal rights were carefully protected; the marriage tie was severely safeguarded; the education of girls was committed to the care of priestesses; and in social functions woman was the equal of man. Domestic life presented a very pleasing aspect and even slaves—slavery was generally confined to those taken in war—enjoyed greater privileges than among any other people. The period of the conquest furnishes a Marina to exemplify the fidelity and devotion of which the native woman was capable. That of the Spanish occupation offers little of interest concerning the womanhood of Mexico, and not until the republic had acquired a distinct nationality, in fact as well as in name, do we find a Mexican type. This period the author regards as the best, but soon the adoption of European and North American fashions and customs destroyed the characteristic Mexican type. This resultant he claims is further deteriorated by the later "veneer" or hybrid culture borrowed from the same sources. The leading characteristics of the native civilization of South America are traced and the salient features of the life and status of its women are presented. Among the Incas equality with men and a condition for woman as favorable as among the Aztecs is shown to have prevailed.

An interesting account is given of the culture of the Araucanians, the desperate warriors who resisted the Spanish invaders long after the rest of the tribes of Chile had submitted to the conquerors. The status of the women of this tribe, and of the peculiar marriage customs is especially interesting; so is the account of the women of the Gauchos whose preëminent claim to notice in a history of woman is that they are "the most unmoral women on the face of the earth." There is also a brief but none the

less informing account of the women of the greatest of South American countries, Brazil, which better than any other southern republic exhibits the advance made in the position and influence of woman in national progress and well-being.

The record of individual women in this section is scanty; but the general outline of the growth of feminine influence in recent times is noted. Woman in politics, in revolutionary movements, and, still more notably, woman in the social and educational progress that is now making the best history of South America the author discriminatingly presents to the reader, with individual mention of foremost leaders of thought.

Of the American woman proper, the author follows the steps from settlement days when the principles were to be tested which moved the Pilgrims to self-exile. Her influence and her initiative, illustrated by characteristic story and narrative of environment, are presented with precision and clearness so that the reader can grasp the subtle power exercised by woman during the formative period. Similarly are the women of the great colony to the South considered, and the points of divergence and their causes and results noted as compared with the northern colony.

The typical American woman is remarkable among women not merely as a type, but also because she is the evolution of only a few generations. She is without a traditional culture, but, as the author asserts, she inherited the cultures of all the nations. Beginning with the basic culture of the mother country she has grafted thereon the native branches which have sprung from her environment and has absorbed such mental and temperamental characteristics of introduced nationalities as have best suited her conditions, and from all together she has created

the American type of womanhood, whose particular characteristic is to *do*.

In the women of these two mother settlements are found the "foundations and matrices of American femininity." So the causes and growth of the American type of womanhood are shown in its evolutionary processes therein along lines mainly parallel until the need of resistance to the mother country brings about a near approach to a national type. The spread of woman's influence to the constantly extending frontier and the new settlements is broadly but clearly sketched and the potency of the foreign settlers considered.

A very interesting part of the volume traces the development of society at the capital, the growth of an aristocracy, the unification of type that followed the establishment of the republic and marked the early growth of the nation. Still more interesting is the history of the dissolution of the courtly influence at Washington when the great strife reft the national womanhood and twin hatred ruled where unity was so lately waxing in strength. The author's presentation of this period is lucid and convincing, while fearlessly just to the woman of both sections. His emphasis of the causal misunderstanding as regards the women cannot fail to be appreciated, though it places upon our womanhood a heavy responsibility for the sorrows which befell the nation and struck down the South exhausted and almost destroyed.

A chapter on the Women of Canada affords chief interest for the account of the *habitantes,* the only distinct Canadian type of womanhood, though the author recognizes the advanced position occupied by the woman of British North America.

Of the recent developments of the American woman's activities, the sphere of which is ever enlarging, the author

admirably projects on his page all the salient movements. Many phases of activity are of course tentative and their permanency and value are yet undetermined, while others mark the appreciation of the obligations associated with wealth or the need of diversion attending the enjoyment of leisure; all, however, are characteristic of the unresting energy of the American woman. If this characteristic is responsible for some illogical and occasionally harmful manifestations, the fact remains that the sum of the results is vastly preponderant for the good of the nation and the advancement, morally, intellectually, and physically of humanity.

The author is to be congratulated for his boldness in undertaking to set forth the broad picture of woman's part in the movements of the last quarter of a century. The task is perplexing, almost terrifying to mere man; conditions are in a state of flux or, more properly speaking, bubbling activity, but a wise discrimination has been shown in the present case. Much of the American woman's history that is unfamiliar will be found in this volume, which is sympathetic throughout, and expresses admiration for the noble and the good in all the stages of that subtle evolution which we now recognize as the American woman.

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Chapter I

The Aboriginal Woman

I

THE ABORIGINAL WOMAN

THE attempt to crystallize within the space of a single chapter even the most salient facts concerning the aboriginal woman of America is one foredoomed to failure. It is true that even in the present advanced state of ethnology there is comparatively little knowledge of the conditions which have obtained, and even of those which do obtain, among the red people of our continent; we can indeed see and record the outer results, but the inner causes are still in great measure hidden from us. The American Indian is a peculiar people in the strictest sense of the words; and is not to be judged by the standards that we apply to those races with whose history we are more familiar, nor is he to be measured by their heights or depths. In many ways he is, and always has been, a law unto himself; and although this state of things is passing away beneath the influence of a steadily advancing civilization, it has been conquered rather than modified, and the Indian remains beneath the surface the same enigma, the same unique individuality, that he has ever been.

Moreover, there is a peculiar difficulty in dealing with this division of our subject. One is forced to speak almost entirely in generalities, this compulsion existing both because of spatial limitations and because of the dearth of exact knowledge that still exists concerning the conditions

of the Amerind in the far past. Yet enough is known to assure us that only the broadest generalities are inclusively true. The custom which was a rule of life among the Hurons of the North may have been entirely unknown among the Seminoles of the South; the cult which was of deep foundation among the Delawares of the Lakes may never have come to the knowledge of the Navajos of the great plains or the Tehamas who dwelt on the shores of the Pacific. For it is a fact which has never received sufficient recognition that the Amerind—to adopt a convenient, though not entirely defensible, nomenclature—had as many national divisions as have the inhabitants of Europe or Asia. We speak of the "tribes" of American Indians, and in so doing we are entirely correct; yet we thus blind ourselves to the significance of the divisions which have always existed, because we are accustomed to give to the word "tribe" a limited meaning which is not strictly its possession. The settlers of our country came far nearer to truth of expression when they spoke of "the Five Nations"; for nations many of these tribes really were, and nations radically differing in all but physical characteristics, and not infrequently, where there existed great divergence of climatic conditions, in physical characteristics also. It is true that the bounds of nationality were not so sharply drawn as they were, for example, between the Gaul and the Teuton, the Slav and the Briton; but they existed, and were discernible in many important matters. Thus the wide divergence of custom and conditions which frequently appears in our study of the Amerind was not mere accident, but was the product of a variant civilization—if we may apply such term to the barbaric conditions which for the most part existed when the race was introduced to the knowledge of Europeans. For this reason, generalization regarding the race

is dangerous and usually leads to inaccuracy. Because, for example, a Modoc might kill his mother-in-law without incurring any penalty for the deed, we must not assume that such a custom was prevalent among all the tribes of the American Indians. Because among the Tehamas the newborn child was thrown into a stream by its mother immediately after its birth, when if it rose to the surface and cried it was rescued, while if it sank to rise no more its body was left to be carried away by the current, we must not therefore conclude that such a proceeding was common among the rest of the tribes of the Pacific slope. Each nation, and frequently each tribe, in the more limited sense of the word, had its own customs, its own superstitions, its own creed, its own conditions of existence. Yet there were certain manifestations of these circumstances which could be found among all the nations of the primeval American continent, and it is these things, as they relate to the women of the Amerinds, that it is the purpose of this chapter to discuss, as well as to cast a rapid glance over the general history and progress of the aboriginal woman of the continent of North America.

In order that the reader shall understand the normal position of woman among the Amerinds in their undisturbed civilization, it is necessary to refer to the usual constitution and conditions of the American tribes in general. In the light of modern research, there can be little doubt—though the fact was for long neglected—that the original American society, as met with by the first explorers of the country, was founded upon the gens, the totem or clan, as the social unit rather than upon the family, as was long supposed. Mr. Powell defines the American gens as "an organized body of consanguineal kindred"; and while this constituence was often modified by the introduction, by adoption, of strangers into the gens, in

such cases the tribal conscience was satisfied with the fiction that such adoption left undisturbed the relation of the gens as consanguineous. An indeterminate number of these gentes, whose members dwelt together and were under common obligation to assist one another, composed the tribe. There were also "phratries," or religious brotherhoods, composed of smaller groups of the gentes; but these need not here be considered. The gens was autonomic, at least to all practical ends; it selected its own chieftain and decided all matters relating to questions of property or blood-vengeance when these concerned its own members. Each gens was represented in the council of the tribe, which council selected the tribal chief. Members of one gens could not intermarry; and, most important of all to our present purpose, it was by the female line that descent was traced and that property descended. Such is a brief sketch of the American tribal organization.

This, however, was the organization in theory only; when it came to the matter of practice, it is very rarely, indeed, that we find the theory preserved immutable. On the contrary, there were so many exceptions that we must regard the rule only as one to be kept in sight for the purposes of generalization. For example, the law of descent in the female line was very often abrogated, even where the gentile system was in force; and consanguineous marriages, and even incest,—rare though this is among primitive peoples, probably because, as Darwin points out, familiarity is not inducive of affection,—were not unknown. However, there is enough stability in the theory to warrant the deduction of certain general statements dependent upon it.

We are now prepared to take a view of the status of woman among the tribes of primitive America. It is the general belief that she was a mere chattel, having no

rights whatever, existing merely upon the sufferance of her husband, and in all ways a slave, a creature without rights or privileges. Such a picture is far from the truth, even though it contain many aspects of partial truth. As a matter of fact, the matriarchal system prevailed in the majority of the American tribes; and this alone is sufficient to show that woman had some rights. These were not precisely personal, but rather gentile; yet they acted in many ways as personal. For example, where the matriarchal system was in force, all property rights, as between husband and wife, vested in the latter; she alone could dispose of property,—and that at her discretion,—and it was to her relatives and not to his that the property passed on the death of the pair. Moreover, in the tribes wherein prevailed the theory of maternal descent, the children did not look upon the father as a relative; he was not of their gens, and they owed him no duties whatever. So far was this theory carried in many cases that the children would not provide for their fathers when these became disabled by sickness, accident, or age, but sent their unfortunate sires for assistance to the gentes from which they came. Again, the life of a woman was in many cases rated as of higher value than that of a man. We have Father Ragueneau's authority for the statement that among the Hurons thirty gifts was considered sufficient compensation for the death of a man, but the blood-money exacted for the killing of a woman was forty gifts. Such a condition of affairs as that mentioned by the old Jesuit is strong argument for the theory that woman was held by the primitive Americans in higher esteem than has been generally thought, while her control of the property must have won for her—judging from modern civilized instances—at least some consideration from her husband.

Undoubtedly there was an obverse side to the picture. Marriage by purchase was a feature of American primitive existence; and, though this also has its modern counterpart, the methods pursued among the Amerinds were not so pleasing to the vanity of the bride as are those of our own day and civilization. The woman herself rarely had anything to say in the matter; sometimes the selection of a wife for a warrior was undertaken by the whole gens, or at least a committee thereof. Among the Hurons, for instance, this selection was made by the old women, and we are told by J. W. Sanborn that these old ladies, in their search for fitting brides for the young men of the tribe, "united them with painful uniformity to women several years their senior." This may have been wiser in tribal polity than agreeable to the warriors; as for the prospective brides, their preferences were not taken into account at all. In view of these facts, it is no wonder that every lake in our country can boast its "Lovers' Leap," where the young Indian pair, fleeing from their cruel parents, cast themselves headlong down—to be afterward "enshrined in song and story."

"Song and story" have indeed lent their potent aid to confuse and blur our view of the primitive American woman. Longfellow's story of *Hiawatha* is famous for many reasons, but the chief among them is not its fidelity to truth of conditions. Yet so truly has the name of Minnehaha, "The Laughing Water," become even as a household word to many of our readers of poetry that this sketch would seem incomplete were no reference made to it here. All know the poetic story: how the demi-god Hiawatha, miraculous of birth, tutelary genius of the Indians of North America, wise, benign, powerful, teacher of all good, protector against all ills, marries the lovely Minnehaha, the daughter of the old Dakota

arrow-maker. Here would seem to be a union blessed of the gods; yet it is foredoomed to bring but sorrow. Not even the power of Hiawatha can save his beloved Minnehaha from the impending and foretold fate which is to be hers. At last "Famine" and "Fever," two unbidden and unwelcome guests, force entrance into her wigwam; she cannot withstand the baleful glare of Death, and, uttering the cry of "Hiawatha! Hiawatha!" she passes alone into "the Kingdom of Ponemah, the land of the Hereafter." It is all very beautiful in its fancy and imagination, but nowhere in the poem do we find the American primitive woman as we have learned to see her through the calmer eyes of those who have sought her story in lower strata than those of poesy.

Polygamy generally prevailed among the Amerinds, and modern civilization is accustomed to regard this as an evil from the standpoint of the woman. It may, however, be questioned whether in this instance, as in so many others, our pity has not been misplaced. The work of the fields was universally performed by women, their lords and masters confining their contribution to the household work to furnishing the table with fish and game. Had monogamy prevailed, the lot of the wife would necessarily have been hard; the work which she would have found to her hand would have been more than she could accomplish, and she must have sunk under it. But the custom of polygamy obviated such necessity, for it brought into the household other servants who should perform the requisite tasks. It is at least probable, though it is not an established fact, that each household had a chief wife, to whom the rest were subservient; in fact, there is reason to believe that the constitution of the Indian household was not unlike that of the Israelites, wherein the added "wives" were little else than concubines, having a legal status but not

full rights of wifeship. Be this as it may, there can be no doubt that polygamy, apart from its moral aspect, was an institution for which the Indian wife had cause to be profoundly grateful. It ameliorated her lot in such wise that she was really subject to no more hardships than is the European peasant woman of the present day.

On the other hand, it would seem that at least in some instances the husband had absolute rights of life and death over his wife. In the not very edifying—and probably even less authentic—autobiography of James Beckwourth, the white man who was long chief of the Crow tribe, there is related an incident where, his Blackfoot wife having shown disregard to his commands, he coolly took up his war club and struck her on the head, stunning her, and, as was thought at the time, killing her. The blow turned out not to be fatal; but this does not obscure the point of the incident, which lies in the fact that the father of the woman, who was present, told Beckwourth that he had done perfectly right and acted entirely as befitted a great warrior. Beckwourth rather plumed himself upon his conduct,—though it is difficult to see wherein the incident called for the display of any very heroic qualities,—and in his narration almost apologizes for the fact that he did not strike quite so hard a blow as he had intended; but, while the story has its amusing features, our concern in the matter lies in the fact that such conduct seems to have been entirely conventional. This incident occurred in the beginning of the last century; but it is evident that it must have been a survival of custom, and not a novelty introduced by a fresh civilization.

Yet we hear at times of women taking part in the most important councils of their nations, of their even leading warriors to battle, of their exercise of all the functions of a ruler. Women have been made head chiefs; a very

notable instance of a woman ruler was the "Queen of Pamunkey," who was the widow of Totapotamoi, a great Indian chief in the Virginias. She came to one of the councils of the Virginia Burgesses in the time of Berkeley, and was the recipient of much attention. She was described as a woman of majestic presence, who entered the council chamber "with a comportment graceful to admiration, grave court-like gestures, and a majestic air on her face"; and through the quaint old verbiage we can descry a woman of carriage and powers of intellect remarkable in her race. Her dress was picturesque; she wore a sort of crown of black and white wampum plaited together, and her fine figure was covered by a robe of buckskin, dressed with the hair outward and decorated with fringes—not impossibly scalplocks—from the shoulders to the hem. She had been summoned to the council to give a promise of help; but she had her own grievances to relate in the fact that her husband had been slain while fighting for the English, and yet she had never received any compensation or acknowledgment of his services. The incident holds for us its chief interest as a proof of the high standing of individual women among the tribes of the Atlantic slope. This female rule was not a passing custom; it was evidently of long establishment at the time of the coming of the colonists, and it continued into later colonial and even into Revolutionary times. Of the later instances of women chiefs, Queen Esther furnishes a noted example. This abominable woman, who played such a prominent part in the massacre of Wyoming in 1778, was a half-breed, probably the daughter of Catherine Montour, also a half-breed and a fiend incarnate. In the attack upon Wyoming Valley, led by Major John Butler,—son of that Walter Butler whose name was so execrated by the colonists,—the Senecas

took part, led by a noted chief named Gi-on-gwah-tuh and by Queen Esther, who was probably, though this is not certain, in supreme command of the Indians. However this may be, we know that she led the attack, fighting like a fiend, and that after the action sixteen prisoners were placed in a circle around a large stone, known to this day as Queen Esther's Rock. Striking up a chant, she passed around the circle, at each step dashing out the brains of a victim. Two of the prisoners, however, managed to make a dash for liberty and succeeded in effecting their escape, and it is to them that we owe our account of the massacre.

As is so often the case in matters of colonial record, there is a confusion between Queen Esther and her mother, and most writers allege that the "queen" was herself the Catherine Montour whom others claim to have been the mother of the chieftainess. The latter theory is probably correct. When in 1744 Catherine Montour, who, in her youth, had been captured and adopted by the Senecas, appeared at a council of the Indian commissioners and delegates from the Six Nations, the council being held at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, we are told by Stone, in his life of Sir William Johnson, that "Although so young when made a prisoner, she had nevertheless preserved her language; and being in youth and middle age very handsome and of good address, she had been greatly caressed by the gentlewomen of Philadelphia during her occasional visits to that city with her people on business. Indeed, she was always held in great esteem by the white people, invited to their houses, and entertained with marked civility."

It would seem, then, that in 1744 Catherine Montour had already passed middle age, and indeed we know from the account of Lord Cornbury that she was born some

time before the close of the seventeenth century. It would therefore seem most probable that Queen Esther was the daughter of the Catherine Montour who was a Huron by birth and a Seneca by adoption; but this matters little in the search for the deductions to be made from the story of Queen Esther and the unfortunate Wyoming Valley. Accepting as accurate only that part of her history which deals with the massacre, we know that Esther was a war chief of the Senecas and that she had absolute control over them. We also find that the Catherine Montour of Stone's account, whether or not she was identical with Queen Esther, was of such influence with her tribe that she was selected by them as a delegate to an important convention. This, then, furnishes us with a specific instance of the power of women among the Indians.

An incident in this same massacre of Wyoming is illustrative of a somewhat curious fact with regard to Indian life,—the adaptability of their captives to the life of the woods. There was captured by the Indians a little girl named Frances Slocum, about five years old. For long all trace of her was lost; but in 1835, more than fifty years after the massacre, an old woman known as Maconaqua, living in a Miami village in Indiana, was by accident identified as the lost Frances Slocum. To all appearance she was an Indian; and she was really so in costume, habits, and even in manner of thought. When the events of her childhood were recalled to her memory, she herself was able to give evidence which rendered her identification unquestionably complete. But when pressed to return to civilization and her relatives, she absolutely declined. "I cannot go," she said; "I have always lived with the Indians; I am used to them; I wish to live and die with them. My husband and my boys are buried here, and I cannot leave them. I have a house and land, two

daughters, a son-in-law, and grandchildren. I was a sapling when they took me. It is all gone past. I should not be happy with my white relatives. I am glad to see them; but I cannot go."

So she was left with her red brothers by adoption; but when, some ten years later, the Miami Indians were moved West, a bill was introduced into Congress by a Mr. Bidlack, securing to Maconaqua and her heirs a tract of land a mile square, embracing the home in which she had so long lived. But she pined after her red kindred, and in 1847 died from sheer weariness of the new conditions of her existence, and was buried near the confluence of the Wabash and the Missisinewa Rivers.

This incident is here related not merely for the sake of the pathos which it holds, but for the purpose of noting a curious contrast between the sons of the wilderness and the children of civilization. The case of Frances Slocum is typical; many a captive has been led away by the red men, and has afterward become so completely Indianized that he or she would stubbornly refuse to return to the life of the white race, and, if forced to do so, would pine and die for lack of the breath of the forests and plains. Yet never has there been known an instance where a red man became reconciled to life among the whites; always, when not forcibly detained captive, they fled back to the free life which had been theirs, even if they had known it but as children; if kept in captivity, they broke their chains by death. So that when we vaunt our civilization we must remember that it has no charms for those who have known the life of the woods, and thus we learn some at least of the reasons why we have failed to produce from the Indian a finished product of the civilization of our day.

Uncongenial as it may be to our pride of race to admit the fact, it would seem certain that the Indian character

has power of persistence over that of the Caucasian. Many were the white captives whose blood flowed in the veins of succeeding generations of red men, but that blood was never powerful even to modify the traits which were the inheritance of the Indian. It is most likely that the first white child ever born on our shores—that Virginia Dare whose story has been so often told that it is needless here to recapitulate it—was carried captive to the tents of the Indians and in time became the wife of some brave, and that her blood is in the veins of some of the survivors of the red men; but it had no power to make itself known in any persistence of trait. It is certain that a half-breed, whatever the circumstances of his education, almost invariably shows the dominance of the Indian nature over the white. This fact, which has not received adequate attention by students of ethnology, is worthy of consideration in its significance; but this is not the place for such consideration.

After this somewhat lengthy digression, let us now return to our more immediate subject, the status of woman among the aborigines during their period of freedom from white influence. Enough has been said to show that such status was widely different from that usually attributed to the women of the Amerinds. It is most true that women were hewers of wood and drawers of water—that they performed most or all of the labor which civilization is accustomed to look upon as menial and much that it considers the rightful duty of man; but in this respect the American Indian did not differ from most or all primitive peoples. It is only civilization that has released woman from the tasks which she was accustomed to perform during the days when the chief sources of sustenance were found in the spoils of the chase, the duty of providing such sustenance naturally falling to the men of the

community or household. This division of labor—if so it can be called—has been in all countries and among all peoples destructive to the claims of woman to high consideration. Among primitive peoples there has never been recognized that which is now known as chivalry toward the weaker sex; if only because of weakness, rendering resistance to tyranny and oppression impossible, women in such communities have always been relegated to the position of slaves and chattels. Yet this state of affairs obtained less strongly among the American Indians than among most races in similar conditions of civilization. With the former, woman had many privileges which she was usually denied among other similarly developed peoples. Not only, as has been shown, did she have the opportunity granted her to make herself a power in her tribe, if her intellect were of force sufficient to enable her thus to do, but she had certain well-defined privileges inherent in her sex—privileges which sometimes were powerful even to overcome the strength of custom or the promptings of vengeance. One of these peculiar privileges is illustrated in the story of Pocahontas, and, notwithstanding the hoary antiquity of the tale, it must be set down here in order to illustrate this and some other points needful to be understood if we are to comprehend the true position of the Amerind woman among her fellows.

When John Smith—if we are to believe his own account, which in this one instance seems fairly credible—had been taken prisoner by Opechancanough and led before Powhatan for judgment, the matter at issue was summarily settled in this wise: the prisoner was laid upon the ground, his head rested upon a large stone, and a club was poised ready to dash out his brains. Nevertheless, the adventurer's brains, which served him so well afterward when he came to write an account of his perils by land and sea,—being

restrained in their flights by no scruples as to the difference between truth and falsehood,—were not to be wasted upon the soil of Virginia; for Matoaca, or Pocahontas, as she is more popularly known, the daughter of Powhatan, rushed forward, threw herself upon the body of Smith to shield him from the threatening club, and claimed him for her own under the custom which permitted Indian women thus to rescue captives taken in fight or by wile. The young princess—as the English inaccurately termed her—being but twelve or thirteen years of age at the time, it is not probable that she claimed Smith for her husband, though even this is by no means impossible, as early betrothals were not uncommon among the Amerinds; but she could just as easily and efficaciously adopt him as her brother, and it is more likely that she chose this less drastic method of preserving his life. At all events, Smith was rescued from the fate which had threatened him; and while it is by no means impossible that the wily old savage, Powhatan, had arranged the whole matter, adoption and all, with a view to establishing the closest and most favorable relations with such a conjurer as Smith was held to be,—this view is suggested to future historians in their search for the truth concerning John Smith,—the fact remains that Smith was saved, and one of the noblest liars that ever graced the world was preserved to humanity. It is interesting to note that Smith records that at Appomatox, afterward Bermuda Hundred, he found a female *werowance*, or queen, "a fat, lusty, manly woman," who was almost smothered in copper ornaments: a circumstance which tends to confirm the fact of the frequency of women rulers among the Indians.

Pocahontas was not destined to become the wife of the man whom she had saved. Whether or not she regarded him with the eyes of more than sisterly affection is

uncertain, but it is entirely certain that Captain John Smith never loved anything but his own valuable person. Some years later, Pocahontas was treacherously captured by one Captain Argall—who bought her from some Potomac Indians whom she was visiting, the price paid being a copper kettle, a valuation which would seem to make strange the pride of those who claim descent from the "princess"—and held as a hostage. Soon after her capture she was married to John Rolfe, though whether willingly or in the rôle of a captive does not appear. Taken by Rolfe to England, she was visited by Smith, whose account of the single interview which occurred is one of the most cold-blooded pieces of writing that was ever put on paper. It is worth quoting in its display of dignity and pathos on the part of the savage and of ingratitude and callousness to all decent feelings on the part of the Christian —by courtesy:

"Being about this time about to set sail for New England, I could not stay to do her that service I desired and she well deserved; but hearing she was at Brentford with divers of my friends, I went to see her. After a modest salutation, without a word she turned about, obscured her face, not seeming well contented. . . . But not long after, she began to talk, and remembered me well what courtesies she had done, saying, 'You did promise Powhatan what was yours should be his, and he the like unto you; you called him father, being in his land a stranger, and by the same reason so must I do you.' (Which, though I would have excused, I durst not allow of that title, because she was a king's daughter.) With a well-set countenance she said, 'Were you not afraid to come into my father's country, and caused fear in him and all his people but me; and fear you here I should call you father? I tell you then I will, and you

shall call me child, and so I will be for ever and ever your countryman. They did tell us always you were dead, and I knew no other till I came to Plymouth; yet Powhatan did command Uttamatomakin to seek you and to know the truth, because your countrymen will lie much.' "

The only reason that exists for believing the report of this interview, coming from the source it does, is the fact that it tells heavily against the recounter, though his invariable, smug self-conceit prevents him from seeing this aspect of the matter. The dignified reproach of Smith's neglect, the pathetic appeal to the courtesies which had been lavished upon him,—she was too proud to allude to her rescue of his brains from the impending club,—and the proud anger which breaks forth in the determination that she will call him "father," as is her right, form a fine contrast to the petty and selfish attitude of her erstwhile friend, who would have "excused" her using the tender title of father, but that she was "a king's daughter" and so might by use of the word place him in a false position toward his patron, Prince Charles. Of course, this was the merest excuse; he knew perfectly well that such a thing was ridiculous; but he needed some excuse for his unmanly attitude toward the woman who had saved his life and whose father had called him friend. It is true that King James had objected to the "presumption" of Rolfe in marrying a "lady of royal birth"; but even that absurd attitude of the king gives no excuse for Smith, since between marriage with a "princess" and the mere use of the formal but affectionate title of "father" lay a broad gulf.

The contemptible captain met his savior no more; for the Lady Rebecca, as Pocahontas was now called, after being presented at court and winning universal admiration

by her dignified bearing and lovable disposition, died of consumption just as she was about to set sail for her native land. She left one child, a son, by Rolfe, and through him her blood flows in the veins of some of the Virginia families of our own day. John Randolph of Roanoke made it his boast that he was one of the descendants of the Indian "princess"; but then John Randolph was very eccentric indeed in more ways than one.

If more than proportional space has been devoted to this history of Pocahontas, it is because in the narrative, and especially in the characteristic glimpse obtained through the excerpt from Smith's story of the interview, are to be found several very suggestive lessons as to the nature as well as status of the Indian woman in the time of the early colonists, before the new civilization had exerted any formative influence whatever upon the old. The dignity of bearing, the eloquence of speech, the modest and yet impressive demeanor of this child of the woods were of her nature and training, not grafted there by the environment in which she found herself during her residence in England. In the eyes of those who surrounded her she was but a savage; but to us she is far more, for she is representative of a race which has been greatly misunderstood. It was a typical Indian woman who stood in such splendid contrast to the time-serving and ungrateful Smith, who bore herself at court with all the native dignity of a princess of the blood royal, who showed herself in all essentials a better Christian and higher type of true civilization than the majority of those of Caucasian race with whom she came into contact. Such a woman as this was not the product of a state of unredeemed barbarism, neither could she have learned her dignity and self-possession among a people where her sex knew only degraded slavery. That she was the daughter of a chief

was not of itself sufficient to rescue her from the usual lot of her sex, nor was her association with Englishmen—especially of the type of Smith, Argall, or even Rolfe himself—likely to change radically her modes of thought and lend to her any admirable qualities of nature or bearing that were not of her normal environment. So it is impossible to escape the conclusion that among the tribes of Virginia at least—and it is far from probable that these were peculiar in this respect—woman held a position far higher than is generally supposed. It is necessary to reconcile this theory with the known degradation of the Indian woman in after years, and this task is not impossible; but before so doing it is necessary that we retrace our steps to primitive conditions, in order to glance for a moment at the status of women among some of the Western tribes, which were in some respects more highly civilized than their brothers of the Eastern slope.

The red civilization of the East was fairly constant. Between the highest and the lowest of the tribes there was but little difference; the Delawares of the Lakes, the Hurons, the Senecas, the Potomacs, and all the rest of the innumerable tribes which inhabited the country east of the Alleghanies, as well as those dwelling in the Mississippi Valley, showed but little variation of civilization. In the West, however, it was widely different. It is true that there were on the plains many great tribes, such as the Sioux, the Pawnees, the Utahs, the Apaches, and others too numerous to specify, whose general status in the roll of civilization was of very slightly varying average; but there were also tribes which touched the highest and lowest points of Amerind culture. As an example of the latter, mention need be made only of the Pi-Utes, or "Digger" Indians, a tribe as degraded as the Australian aborigines themselves.

The Pi-Utes were the most abject and wretched of all American Indians; they lived chiefly on roots—whence their common name among the whites—and sometimes on offal. Yet even among these degraded people there existed, even up to a comparatively late period, a spirit of tribal devotion, at least if the story be true that is related of them, and which, as it deals with women, is here reproduced without pronouncement upon its entire credibility. It is—or was—said that, as the products of the chase were of great importance to this people, it was necessary that they should be armed with the most effective weapons in their reach, and so they contrived a peculiarly deadly poison with which to tip their small arrows. This poison was so noxious that its distillation from the plant which furnished it—a plant of which the secret was known only to the "Diggers"—always resulted in the death of the person preparing the decoction. It would naturally be thought that the position of the individual who was to prepare the yearly stock of poison for the tribe was one that would be shunned; but, on the contrary, there was an annual contest between the oldest squaws for the honor of becoming the sacrifice for the welfare of the tribe, and the successful competitor proudly gave her life that the rest might live.

For this story, though cited from good authority, one may well decline to vouch; but it is probably not untrue, since it is essentially of the Indian spirit. Be this as it may, the Pi-Utes unquestionably represented the most degraded aspect of Indian existence and nature. On the other hand, there were the Yumas—often called the Apaches—and the Maricopas, both agricultural tribes and most probably at one time dwellers in adobe houses. They understood the principles of irrigation and attained a high degree of Indian culture. Yet more remarkable in this

respect were the Navajos, whose name is said to signify "large cornfields" and to have arisen from the extensive agriculture practised by the tribe. When they were first discovered by the Spaniards in 1541 they lived in large dwellings, partly subterranean, tilled the soil, irrigated their fields by means of artificial watercourses, or *acequias,* and generally displayed all the signs of the highest type of primitive civilization. Again, there were the Pueblo Indians, as they are generally known—the term is really ambiguous and probably includes many different tribes and even stocks, being given indiscriminately to the inhabitants of the ruined towns which have been found throughout Arizona and the adjacent territory. While the civilization of these town dwellers was most probably local rather than racial, an accident of situation and propinquity, it was none the less decided.

Now, among such tribes, in the most advanced state of red civilization, the status of woman was of necessity somewhat different even from that which she enjoyed among the Sioux, Comanches, or other of the great tent-dwelling peoples. Among the Navajos, who are chosen for example as being in many respects typical, the son followed the gens of his mother, the matriarchal system being in full force; while among the Sarcees, a kindred tribe, the mother-in-law was held in such respect that the husband of her daughter could not sit at meat with her, or even touch her, without rendering himself amenable to a fine. Yet polygamy existed among the Navajos, and marriage by purchase was the rule. Moreover, if we are to believe the accounts of the early explorers of the West, among all the southern tribes marital affection was practically unknown; the wife was a mere slave, and in some of the tribes so lax was the marital tie that it was not uncommon for friends to exchange wives in token of amity. So it would seem that the status of

woman, contrary to the general rule, was higher where the outer signs of civilization were less marked. Except in the case of the Nehaunies, a tribe of eastern Alaska, there is no known instance of a Western gens being ruled by a woman, though, on the other hand, there seems to be little doubt that among the Navajos—whose religion was somewhat of the nature of that practised by the Aztecs, with which race they were indeed associated in stock—women at times bore a prominent part in the service of the gods, in the ceremonial of the rites and even in the reading of omens.

Conceding due consideration to the difficulty of formulating any general theory for the different tribes, even of the same scope of culture, it would yet seem certain that woman's place among the Western Amerinds was far inferior to that held by her in the East. Yet among the house dwellers, such as the Pueblos and Navajos, her lot must have been, in material matters, easier than that of her Eastern sister. In the agricultural nations we find the men doing the heavier portion of the labor incident to cultivation of the soil, though the women probably acted as sowers, gleaners, and the like, as do the peasant women of Europe to this day. On the whole, it is evident that the women of the advanced Western tribes were inferior in general status, but superior in ease of lot, to their sisters of the Atlantic slope.

It is now time to turn from the picture of the aboriginal woman as she stood at the time of the coming of the first settlers, and trace, as far as possible by general rule, the influences exerted upon her status by contact with the incoming civilization of the East. It is in the consequences of this influence that we may find an explanation of the lowering of the status of the Amerind woman; for the effect of that inroad of civilization was for long distinctly inimical

to the development of the Indian. How far the theory of our culture was applicable to the needs of the Amerind can be only a subject of speculation, for the errors of application of that theory debarred the Indians from participation in any benefits which they might have received thereunder. The imperfect generalization which has been applied to the study of the American Indian is most conspicuous in error in its failure to take account of the marked degradation which ensued in the Indian character after the settlement of the country by the whites. It is not necessary or practicable here to trace the witness of this degradation in full strength; but it can be seen evidenced in the failure of the Indian woman to maintain her status, either of position or of character. We may indeed find a Queen Esther after the establishment of the colonists as owners of the country; but we never again see a Pocahontas. Under the incursions of a civilization which assumed its most repugnant form in its dealing with the Indians, there ensued on the part of the latter a reversion to a more barbarous type than had before been prevalent. Nor was this strange; for the necessities under which he found himself drove the Indian backward into barbarism. The influence of "firewater" upon the character of the red man has been often expatiated upon; but this was in truth but a small factor in the sum of the general result. A conquered race, driven from its strongholds into the primitive life of savagery to find means of sustenance, will always relapse into a state of barbarism; history is not wanting in examples of this truth. It was thus with the Indians of North America. Though the process was gradual, it was none the less sure; they found themselves involved in an unending contest for actual existence, and such a state is highly inimical to development along upward-tending lines.

As has been inevitably the case in similar instances, they retrograded.

It is to this cause—never perhaps sufficiently considered in studies of the Indian nature—that must be referred much that would otherwise appear inexplicable. Even though the early colonists were as a rule ill disposed toward the Indians, as was befitting those who desired a pretext for wholesale robbery of territory, yet their narratives stand in sharp contrast to the tales of Amerind nature as we have them of later date, and in still greater contrast to our present knowledge. Instead of the progress for which one might look, if he should be of those who are convinced of the admirable effects of the introduction of our civilization, there was steady retrogression. The early colonists found a species of civilization, however crude; but it did not advance, or even continue. The Indians of the East, of course, felt the effect of the influx of white men long before their brethren of the West; and we will first glance at the effect here upon the status of woman from the new conditions.

While before the coming of the whites there was doubtless frequent warfare among the red men, and while the men were preëminently warriors, yet warfare was not their normal state. Tribal feuds there were in plenty, and these ever and again broke out into strife; but, as a rule, the tribes lived in general amity, and not infrequently, as in the case of the Iroquois, or Five Nations, there were treaties of alliance and support. With the evolution and progress of the new conditions, however, the Indian found himself an Ishmael indeed. Not only were tribal jealousies and feuds augmented, but the red men became again and again involved in the wars of the whites, so that strife became their constant condition of existence. Battling for very life,—and, in their bewilderment and lack of

racial organization, often turning their weapons against each other instead of the common foe,—the Indians were soon reduced to the condition of mere wandering and militant tribes, their culture forgotten and indeed inapplicable to the changed conditions. In this state of affairs all that was not strictly military became worthless; and so woman, save as leader or Amazon, lost her rightful position in Indian society. She now became, indeed, a mere chattel, a slave, even a detriment, however necessarily tolerated. She was useful in producing warriors and in ministering to their physical needs; but there her functions ceased. Though in rare instances, as in the case of Catherine Montour, a woman might be heard at the council fire, this was regarded as a survival of a custom decidedly "more honored in the breach than the observance"; from a state of at least partial equality with the men, she was soon, by the altered circumstances of her race, reduced to a condition of abject slavery and degradation.

The changed conditions were powerful over the nature as well as the status of the Indian woman. The colonists always insisted most strenuously upon the natural cruelty of the Indians; but we must remember that this was not a quality confined to barbarism, since even in the days of the first colonists the Inquisition was an established institution, while the tortures practised in England during the reign of "Good Queen Bess" might have seemed to the most enthusiastic Indian warrior too cruel to be used by him on his worst enemy. There can, however, be no question that the Indians, like so many other primitive peoples, delighted in torture of their foes—though they did not emulate their white fellows by torturing a man because he happened to differ from them in a matter of theory. Now it has been seen in the case of Pocahontas that it was a custom of the women to interfere to save the lives of

prisoners; and the existence of such a well-defined custom argues a certain tender-heartedness among the women. Under the new conditions of constant strife, however, this "quality of mercy" became a thing of the past. It is the nature of woman to be enthusiastic in evil as in good; and it soon came about that it was the women of the Indians who were the most bloodthirsty and cruel of their race. It was they who heaped the foulest insults upon a captive enemy, who most delighted in the most terrible torture of that foe, who were best pleased if his agony extorted from him the tribute of a groan.

This indulgence in the most depraved instincts of the animal nature of course reacted. The women of the Amerinds lost all the distinctively feminine characteristics that they had ever possessed, and with them even their slight influence upon the men of their race. These saw in their women the evidences of a lower nature than their own, instead of one higher, and so they calmly and justly relegated those who were developing toward animalism to the level of an animal. The rule was not invariable; but it was general. There still remained a few "mothers in Israel," women who by force of character maintained some influence in their tribes; but, as a rule, the squaw was a mere beast of burden, a mere "breeder of sinners." The facility in adaptation to conditions which has always been one of woman's prominent traits had proved fatal to the status and nature of the Amerind woman.

There were some notable exceptions. In the long Seminole war the Indians were led by a remarkable man named Osceola. He was a half-breed, the son of an Indian woman by a white named Powell; but Osceola, though reared amid the environment of Caucasian civilization, never acknowledged any relationship to the whites. The Seminoles preserved the gentile system, in which the child

followed the fortunes of its mother, and Osceola acknowledged none but Indian racial laws. Of his mother but little is known; but it is certain that she was a woman of stern and decided character, that she accepted the benefits of white civilization without admitting any gratitude therefor, and that she instilled into her great son the principles which had come down to her from her ancestors. She possessed great influence with her race, as much for her powers of intellect as for her education—for she was excellently taught—and culture; and it is probable that her influence was paramount in the selection of her son as one of the chiefs of his nation. After his rise to fame, we hear no more of her; but that she was a power in her day and way cannot be doubted.

This was at a comparatively late date, and the instance is the last that we find of an Indian woman exerting decided influence within her tribe. Long before the dawn of the last century, the aboriginal woman had lost all little power that had once been hers. That this loss was largely due to her own failure to advance, and her consequent retrogression, we have already seen, but circumstances were also largely responsible for the lapse of feminine prestige.

It may be that one of the causes for the lost influence of women among the Indian tribes was the lowering of the standard of morality. This is a matter upon which it is difficult to pronounce, since morality, always comparative in its standards and to be judged only by the racial creeds which govern it in local applications, was peculiarly variant among the Indian tribes of North America. Judged by the rules of modern civilization, it might be broadly stated that morality was always at a very low ebb among the Amerinds; but such a statement would be entirely unwarranted by the true laws of morality. Polygamy,

for example, is by modern white races held to be immoral; but it was a very common custom among the Amerinds, and that which is sanctioned by custom is assuredly not immoral, though it may be counted *un*-moral. Again, as already noted, there were tribes among which the exchange of wives, temporarily or permanently, was held to be entirely legitimate; and, while such a custom is very far from being in accord with Caucasian standards, it is the custom only, and not the practisers thereof, which is to be blamed by the just moralist. On the other hand, it may be set down as a rule of Indian social life that adultery was severely punished. Even here the point of view was not invariable, some tribes holding the man the more guilty, while others visited punishment chiefly or entirely upon the woman; but the sentiment concerning the crime in the abstract was almost universal. It is very probable —though no authority can be found for the statement— that it was among those tribes where the descent was in the male line that the woman was held chiefly criminal in adultery, since thus the purity of descent was contaminated and diverted, while among those nations where descent was in the female line, the woman was held less guilty than he who shared her crime. However this may be,—and there is too much confusion of statement, as well as too many diverse laws, for us safely to generalize in the matter,—certain it is that adultery was in general looked upon as a heinous crime, usually to be visited with death as its penalty. Yet, with all this strictness regarding the sanctity of the marriage tie, where not abrogated by consent, there was among many of the tribes of the West a singular lack of respect for female purity in general. In more than one tribe, the unmarried women were practically held in common by the unmarried men, though immediately upon marriage the former became strangers to

all but their husbands. Here are contradictions in theory as well as practice, but such contradictions are invariably to be found among primitive peoples, nor can the highest civilization yet known boast entire freedom from them.

While upon the subject of morality, it may be well to glance at the aboriginal customs concerning divorce. As always, any inclusive statement must be prefaced by the warning that generalization is impossible of application to all the nations of North America; only a few very broad rules can be laid down, and these are tried by many exceptions. It may be stated as one of these rules that divorce was general among the Amerinds. As is usually the case where polygamy prevails, divorce was almost invariably at the discretion of the husband; but this rule knew some remarkable exceptions, as among the Pueblo Indians, where, because of the status of the husband as the perpetual guest of his wife, divorce was chiefly in the discretion of the women. It is, however, safe to lay down the general rule that divorce was at the discretion of the husband and rarely needed more than the expression of his wish to become effective and legal. This facility of divorce, of course, made for immorality as at present understood, since it created of marriage little more than a state of concubinage, where the concubine could be cast off at will and made over to another master, so that the marriage relation lacked the continuity which is its most essential feature; but, as a matter of fact, the practice of divorce was uncommon among most of the Amerind tribes. Whether this was because of public sentiment overriding the customary law, as is so often the case among people where law is entirely of custom and not of legislation, or whether the very lack of romantic affection in most marriages among the Indians acted as a safeguard against satiety and disgust, or whether there were other effective

but unconjecturable reasons, cannot be known; but the fact remains that divorce, though easy of accomplishment, was of rare practice among the American Indians as a race.

Thus, even though it be contrary to the general judgment, it appears that we should be justified in pronouncing the morality of the Indian race, judged by their standards and not by those of our civilization, to have been of at least average excellence. With the coming of the white men, however, this state of affairs altered rapidly for the worse. Stern moralists as the Puritans may have been in theory, they were not always so in practice; and Antinomianism, at one time so prevalent among them, may have had much for which to answer. If the cold Puritans were not guiltless in this wise, what could be expected from the Cavaliers or the warm-blooded sons of France? The theory of King James and his councillors, that marriages with Indian maidens would be desirable, was put into at least semi-practice in many of the colonies, and the relations thus established were not continued strictly "under the rose." The consequence of this immorality on the part of the Caucasians, who were held at first by the Indians as a superior race in all ways, reacted upon the aboriginal thought, and the standard of morality became lowered among the redskins, particularly among their women. Here also we find a cause of the retrogression of the Indian woman in all ways.

It is, however, a curious fact that in one instance white immorality was the cause of great and lasting benefit to a white nation. After the occupation of North America by the English and French had become a settled fact, and while there was yet dispute between the two nations for dominance on the continent, there arose among the Indians a man of wonderful ability and wide influence over his race. He was an Ottawa, Pontiac by name; and though

by right chief of only his own tribe, he had before long brought many other tribes to acknowledge him as their head. Soon after the defeat of the French on the Plains of Abraham, the English took possession of Detroit, until then held by the French, and the Indians in the vicinity soon found cause to complain most bitterly of the change in the masters of the region. Pontiac assembled the neighboring tribes and proposed to drive the English from the country. He believed, and not impossibly with reason, that if the British were dealt a severe blow by the Indians, the French, notwithstanding their recent discomfiture and the treaty of peace, would finish the work; and as a preliminary step he proposed to capture Detroit, which from its position was of the first importance to the holding of the region of the Northwest. It must be remembered that at that time Detroit was a fort and not a city; and Pontiac saw that his best chance to capture it was by stratagem. The Indians were nominally at peace with the English; but several of the tribes—among them the Ojibwas and Wyandots—assented to the scheme proposed by Pontiac, and assembled before Detroit. It was Pontiac's plan to propose to Major Gladwyn, in command at Detroit, a meeting inside the fort, where a belt of wampum—the sign of amity—should be presented by the chief and everything done that might promote friendly relations. Suspecting nothing, Gladwyn assented, and Pontiac's scheme seemed sure of fruition.

It chanced, however, that among the Ojibwas was a beautiful girl, named Catherine, and that she came under the notice of Gladwyn. He was enamored of her beauty and proposed to her to become his mistress; and she, honored by the notice of the handsome Englishman, yielded to his desire. It would seem that at first the girl did not know that evil threatened the British; but one evening,

when she came to the fort to visit her lover, she was noticed by him to be absent and sad. At first she would not tell him the reason of her grief; but at last, urged by her love to treachery to her own people, she told him that the Indians had been engaged in filing off the barrels of their rifles so that they could conceal these weapons beneath their cloaks, and that the next day, when the peace conference was to be held, the presentation by Pontiac of the belt of wampum was to be the signal for the armed warriors to rise upon the unsuspecting and weaponless officers in a massacre which should become general when the gates of the fort had been seized by those deputed for the purpose. Gladwyn was not the man to neglect such a warning; and the next day, when Pontiac, surrounded by his apparently peaceful but really armed warriors, was about to hand the wampum belt to Gladwyn, a drum beat, the doors of the council chamber were thrown open, and there appeared at every entrance a file of soldiers with levelled muskets, while in the streets was heard the tramp of marching men hurriedly assembling at the point of danger. Pontiac saw that he was betrayed, and, with quick presence of mind, concluded his speech with some words of friendship, and sat down without having made the intended signal; but Gladwyn, less tactful than the Indian, boldly accused the latter of treachery and dared him to do his worst. He did not, however, take the obvious course of securing the person of Pontiac, who was allowed to depart and who at once began a siege which for vigor and ability is hardly surpassed in the annals even of civilized warfare.

The narrative of the siege of Detroit and the fate of the brave and able chief who conducted it have no connection with the subject of this work; but the incident of the preservation of the fort from Pontiac's ingenious plot is

germane to the matter in hand. Had the Indians been successful in their scheme, it is not at all impossible that France would have made another attempt to maintain her footing in North America; and thus it might be said with some show of reason that Gladwyn's immorality was the cause of the consummation of British dominance in North America, and that an obscure Indian girl saved for England a possession which that country had bought at the price of some of her noblest blood.

But the sentiment that brought about the preservation of the defenders of Detroit, and thus perhaps determined the British title to dominance, was not the inspiration that led another Indian woman to direct the course of the white man in America, and in so doing to contribute largely to the work of subjugating the continent to his race. Sacajawea, the "Bird-woman," born in the mountain region dwelt in by the Shoshones, had been made captive, when a child, by the Blackfeet, the foes of her people, and by them sold into slavery. Her master and husband was Chabonneau, a French wanderer among the Indians. When Lewis and Clark, on their famous expedition, reached the Mandan villages, they found there the Frenchman and his Indian squaw, now a girl of sixteen, and hired them as interpreters and guides. With her lately-born papoose strapped to her back, this little woman's native dexterity proved invaluable to the explorers as they journeyed along the Upper Missouri in their canoes. Across the divide and into the mountains which were her native home the party moved, ever helped and encouraged by Sacajawea. Here, at length, difficulties seemingly too great to be overcome faced the explorers, but the little squaw, recognizing in a valley they had reached the home from which she had been taken five years earlier, saved the turning back of the expedition. At last she was with

her long-lost tribeswomen and winning these, their warriors were soon gathered about her. To them she spoke of the good intentions of the white man and her influence soon established friendship between the explorers and the Shoshones, and their safe conduct through the territory of the tribes was now assured and their way led to the Pacific.

Many incidents are told of the "Bird-woman's" skill, bravery, and fidelity during the long journey from the home of the Mandans to the shore of the Pacific and back to the point of starting. Of these mention may be made of her saving the valuable records and instruments of the explorers; of her sacrifice of a prized ornament to enable Lewis to secure a much desired otter skin; and of her giving to her hungry captain the piece of bread treasured to appease the hunger of her babe in an emergency. These traits of Sacajawea serve to present her as a woman of eminent personal worth, for much more than the acquired skill of her race or the energy born of a desire to revisit her childhood home is transparent in her actions on this memorable journey. Though in her social relation she held a degraded position, she displayed characteristics which place her in a lofty position as to qualities of mind and heart. Unconscious she was, of course, of the vast results which were to follow the expedition, to the success of which she so largely contributed, yet she accepted the mission of her captains and loyally furthered its accomplishment.

Before closing this brief and imperfect attempt to define the primitive and modified status of the Amerind woman it is necessary, that the sketch may have as much completeness as is possible, to cast a hurried glance at the present conditions of the women of the Indian tribes that remain to us.

While the first effects of the impinging civilization were most deleterious to the status and nature of the aboriginal woman, there came a time when, under conditions of comparative peace, there was ampler opportunity for the best of that civilization to prove that it really had a message for red men and women as well as white, though its first words had been so marred in the saying. It would not comport with tenderness for the good name of our country to set forth the wrongs suffered by the Indians at the hands of those who assumed a higher place in the scale of race; the story is written large for all those who care to read. Beneath the combined influences of tyranny, treachery, knavery, and every other crime that the whites could commit against them, together with the degrading effects of the existence which was forced on them and the pernicious results of the introduction of drunkenness as a racial vice, the Indians went from bad to worse, until in the majority of cases they became little better than mere savages. In this retrogression the status of the Indian woman participated, until in almost every tribe within the boundaries of our country she was reduced to the state of the merest beast of burden. Her lot became harder and harder, and was not even ameliorated by the consolations of any religious creed that held promise of better things to come. At last, though very slowly and very late in the history of the Amerinds, there dawned a day when equity began to take some place in our dealings with our red brethren, when there began some organized effort to show them that white civilization held some benefits even for them and that Christianity was something more than a theory. Even then, the efforts to improve the condition of the Indians were chiefly directed toward the education of the youths; for the girls and women there was but little consideration shown. At length, however, this field also was

entered by some devoted men and women,—especially the latter,—and the Indian woman, with as much wonder as joy, found that she too was regarded as something better than a slave and brute, that she too was held as being worthy of education and the influences of refinement. Even yet, this message has not been borne to the majority of the women of the tribes, at least in effective manner; but the leaven has been placed in the lump. At first, the reclamation of the Indian woman from the degradation into which she had fallen was a disheartening work. By long years of maltreatment and neglect she had been rendered almost incapable of understanding that any other lot was possible for her; in many cases, her racial instincts and inherited education revolted against the new order of things which was proposed to her. With the apathy in degradation peculiar to primitive peoples, the Indian woman turned her face from civilization and would have none of it; she was not of it, and it was not for her. But a change of plan resulted in at least partial success. The attempt to teach and refine the elder women—the women who had years of experience of their racial conditions as a barrier to the appreciation of a different order of things—was largely abandoned, and the efforts toward amelioration were put forth for the education of the younger women. Even so, the effort has not yet met with satisfying success, but its results bear promise of the future.

Yet, the outlook is not bright; for the conditions which confront the Indian woman are still not favorable for the material betterment of her lot. Those who generalize with insufficient grasp of the premises are fond of saying that the Indian cannot bear civilization, that it is destructive to his health and morals; but they forget that no race has ever become suddenly civilized, even under the most favorable auspices. There is always the past history of

that race as a controlling influence in the result; physical and social traditions must be reckoned with before the race can fully adapt itself to its new conditions and make the best of them. Unfortunately, all these traditions among the Amerind peoples are highly unfavorable to their acceptance of the civilization peculiar to the environment into which they have been forcibly brought; and this fact, together with the still persistent injustice of treatment which is meted out to them, has resulted in the physical deterioration of their race, until there now looms near the threat of extinction. In these racial conditions the Indian woman, of course, participates; and she has the further disadvantage of being compelled, in order to be able to make her own the best condition that is offered her, to effect a total change in her social relations with her own people. The Indian warrior can perhaps be brought to understand that for him better conditions are possible than those which have been his lot in times past; but it is well-nigh impracticable for him to grasp the truth that it is possible for his slave, his chattel, his beast of burden, to be aught, to herself or to him, than that which she has been almost for time immemorial. The tradition that woman is an inferior being has become so deeply merged into all his conceptions of sociology, that he cannot rid himself of it; and the woman is perforce compelled to accept this tradition, since she cannot traverse it by any appeal that he could understand.

Therefore, it would seem that the future of the Indian woman is not bright. Before she can shake herself free from the trammels of tradition and even superstition which now hold her down, it is probable that her race will have become practically extinct. Yet before that catastrophe it may well be that her lot will have been ameliorated, that she will have emerged from the degradation which

even now is the condition of the greater part of her race and sex, that she will at least have regained the status which was hers before the encroachments of a new and more powerful civilization than that which she knew altered for the worse every condition of her existence. Even this is the less to be hoped for in that the Eastern tribes, which were most cultured in nearly all respects, have now fallen by the wayside in nearly all instances, while the remnants of the Western nations are less adapted to the reception of higher conditions, since they have behind them few or no traditions which make for the best tendencies in this wise. None can safely prophesy of this matter; but, while hope is always permissible, he would be a rash oracle who would foretell the establishment of the Amerind woman upon a plane befitting her sex or even the best traditions of her race.

Chapter II

The Women of Mexico

II

THE WOMEN OF MEXICO

THE story of the women of Mexico, as that country is known to-day, presents few distinctive features. If that story were confined to the status of woman as found in the present inhabitants of the country of the *conquistadores,* there would be but little to tell, since from the time of the first coming of the Spaniards to the present day there has been but little change of consequence in the matter with which we are directly concerned. But the very mention of the name of the Spanish conquerors recalls a civilization which preceded that which we now know—a civilization which in various forms has remained impressed upon the characteristics of Mexico, and one which is therefore of some importance as well as of the greatest interest to us in our study of the progress of women in America. That civilization is, of course, that of the Aztecs, that wonderful race which held Mexico from time immemorial—or, more strictly, indeterminate—up to the hour when Cortés and his followers penetrated to their capital and began the work, to know completion in a few short years, of destroying not only a nation but a civilization, and one that was in many ways the most remarkable of which there is record.

It is in no way needful to enter into the detail of general Aztec sociology. In this work the principal interest is connected with those social aspects and influences which

affect women; yet a few words concerning the chief features of the Aztec civilization are absolutely necessary to the understanding of our subject. The Aztecs—in which general title, for convenience, are included the Tezcucans, though there were differences of civilization, the Tezcucans being in many respects superior to their neighbors—the Aztecs present in nearly every way the greatest racial mystery that has ever come under the notice of the student of comparative ethnology. Their very origin is unknown; it is impossible to discover how much of their civilization they owed to their traditions, how much may have been of gradual growth, and how much may have come to them as a legacy from the still more mysterious Toltecs, later probably known as Mayas, of whom remain wonderful monuments and traditional narratives preserved by the Aztecs. This people appeared in the Anahuac Valley in the sixth or seventh century, and founded their chief town, Tula, about fifty miles north of Mexico City. Their name is said to signify "builders," and tradition ascribes to them an advanced knowledge of arts and a remarkable culture. The supremacy of the Toltecs in the Anahuac Valley lasted till the twelfth century, when they abandoned Tula and mysteriously disappeared. Among the traditions preserved, the most conspicuous concerning the Toltec women is that of Xochitl, queen of one of the later chiefs, or "kings."

Huemac II. began to reign in Mexico about 995, in what is called the Toltec period. Xochitl, accompanied by her father, a nobleman, went to the court of Huemac, carrying with her as an offering to the king a beverage which she had invented. The king tasted the wine, and desired to have more. Later, Xochitl returned to the court, and Huemac, who already was fascinated with the girl, caused her to be retained, and sent a message to her father that

he had placed her in the care of his court ladies and would complete her education. Shortly afterward his queen died, and Huemac immediately made Xochitl his queen.

The labors of Don Mariano Veytia in his *Historia Antigua,* and the researches of more modern scholars, furnish us with some fragmentary history of the Aztecs before the coming of Cortés; but these fragments, in relation to the status of womanhood in those days, cannot be joined into a coherent whole, and consideration will therefore be here given to some aspects of Aztec civilization as found by the conqueror rather than to the pre-Aztec culture. The most notable general feature of that civilization is its singular contradictions. We find a race, gentle, intelligent, refined in some respects beyond European standards of their day—and yet cannibals, at least under certain conditions! We find these people moral, with high ideals of religion in theory—and in practice holding human sacrifices as an essential part of their cult! We find them warlike and yet mild, the conquerors of the neighboring races, and yet ruling these more by force of intellect than of arms. Most wonderful of all, we find a true and high civilization, isolated from all companionship and existing by its own inherent merits, and not, as has been the case with almost all others, by contact and rivalry with others of almost equal powers.

The Aztecs were versed in the arts of agriculture, mechanics, architecture, pottery, and, generally, in the domestic arts. They built beautiful cities, containing noble edifices, both private and public. Their dress was artistic and graceful, and their tastes were worthy of the highest civilization then known. They delighted in flowers, in beautiful gardens, in all manner of natural graces. They lived under the rule of an emperor, and there were many great nobles, of a distinct class and holding large estates.

There was a regular law of descent for these estates, and the principles of entail and of reversion to the crown were understood and practised. There seems to have been a species of feudality as the foundation of the social order, but our knowledge in this respect is too vague to justify us in reasoning from it to any great length. There were courts of justice, with jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases, and there was the legal machinery of higher and lower courts, with the privilege of appeal. The rights of property and persons were fully, if not acutely, recognized. There was a regularly established priesthood, of which the emperor was the official head. There were admirably organized and conducted schools, where morality as well as education was inculcated. In short, there were all the requisites, though not always in modern form, that we are accustomed to consider as the rightful and unique portion of the highest Caucasian culture.

And yet, this cultured and refined people practised cannibalism! Not only did they eat the bodies of captives taken in war and immolated upon their altars in the execution of their religious rites, but, according to Sahagun in his *Historia de Nueva España,* they often, at private feasts, sacrificed a slave and served his flesh to the assembled guests. These dishes were dressed in most elaborate ways, for the Aztecs were excellent cooks. This, however, only adds, in its refinement of bestiality, to the revolting aspect of the custom.

It is now time to turn from this very imperfect summary of the civilization of the Aztecs to the place therein occupied by woman. This place was very high—higher than that gained by the sex in any other race found on the North American continent. It may be stated as a general fact that woman held equal social position with man. Physically they were attractive, their complexions being

light and their hair long and black. They dressed tastefully, their heads being covered by a gauzy veil or wreathed with flowers or even with strings of precious stones and pearls. They wore flowing robes, handsomely trimmed with embroidery, and their appearance was in all ways far superior to that of any other American women.

Their status, while in some respects sharing in the contradictions that we find prevalent among the Aztecs, was, on the whole, almost equal to that of their European sisters of that day. It is true that polygamy—that institution usually so fatal to the place of woman in the community where it is practised—was permissible among the Mexicans; but it is probable that its practice was confined only to the most wealthy and was not invariable among them. On the other hand, the sanctity of the marriage tie, that great safeguard for women, was strongly insisted upon. Not only was the marriage rite formally celebrated as a religious ceremony, but there was instituted a special legal tribunal for the sole purpose of hearing and deciding questions relating to marriage. Divorce existed, but only by a decree of the tribunal mentioned above, and was not a matter of discretion; due reason must be alleged and proved, infidelity being, of course, the primary cause for divorce. Adultery was severely punished; and it is a remarkable fact, as showing the advance made by this people upon the conceptions of the ancient civilizations, that concubinage was exceptional, though slavery was an institution of the country. Even the slave woman, however, held a position advanced beyond that usual in such cases, for her child was born free; there was no such thing as hereditary slavery among the Aztecs. No other civilization, ancient or modern, has been thus generous.

The practical equality of woman to man was recognized in the fact, among others, that women had a distinct and

honorable part in the sacerdotal functions and rites, though they could not participate in sacrifice. The priestesses undertook the education of the girls, the schools being a part of the temples. Here the girls were taught the feminine accomplishments peculiar to their culture as well as those of more general use, such as weaving and embroidering the rich draperies used to cover the altars of their gods. The strictest morality was inculcated in these schools; for the Aztecs were essentially a moral people, and the girls were brought up in habits of the straitest decorum. This they were not likely to exceed, at least while under the tutelage of the priestesses, for offences were visited with the greatest severity, even death being occasionally meted out as punishment for the most marked transgressions. The system of these schools was to some extent conventual, and reverence for religion was instilled as an integral portion of the system.

The education that was received by women among the early Mexicans may be illustrated by a reference to the story of *The Lady of Tula*. Among the Tezcucans, at least at one time, concubinage was recognized as a legitimate appanage of royalty, and the Lady of Tula was one of the concubines of Nezahualpilli, son of the great monarch Nezahualcoyotl and his successor as ruler of the Tezcucan nation. The son of this latter king entered into a correspondence with the Lady of Tula, and, as the offence was capital, the youth was slain by royal command; but we are not concerned so much with the sadness of his fate or with the Roman severity of his father as with the characteristics of the woman who tempted him from his allegiance to his royal sire. It is told of her that, though of humble birth, she possessed most remarkable endowments of mind, that she wrote beautiful verse, and that she was often consulted upon grave matters by the king and his ministers.

She was given a separate establishment, and maintained almost regal state. The information that we have of this woman discloses a very high feminine status among the Tezcucans; and as the chronicler of her powers expresses little or no surprise concerning them, we may assume that such education and standing as she enjoyed were not uncommon among Mexican women, even if not in so high a degree as in the case of the Lady of Tula.

To return to the women of the true Aztecs. When the young girl had emerged from the conventual school she took her place in society as one of its rightful factors. She participated on equal terms with the men in all social functions, eating with them at the banquet and taking part in all the festivities which were so congenial to the somewhat superficial nature of that people. It is true that at the banquets she sat apart from the men, as did also the married women; but this was simply a custom, not a result of inferior status. These banquets were carried on in a style not inferior to the feasts of the old Romans; the tables were covered with flowers, and bowls of water and cotton napkins were furnished to each guest, that they might perform before eating the ablutions which were as formal with the Aztecs as with the Mussulmans. There were golden chafing dishes and cups and platters, as well as table ornaments of the precious metal, which was very common among the Mexicans. The feasts of the wealthy, if we may credit the accounts of early writers, were sumptuously provided with delicacies, such as venison, peccaries, rabbits, "tuzas,"—a species of mole,—fish of many names, turtles, iguanas, turkeys, quails, and numerous other kinds of birds. Vegetables and fruits of several varieties completed the dishes. The variety and quality of food here indicated suggest an epicurean supply rather than the frugal dietary to which the Aztecs are reputed

to have been accustomed. Before eating it was *de rigueur* to smoke, the tobacco being in the form of cigars or used in pipes, the former being held in dainty holders of tortoise shell or silver; but we are not informed whether or not the women participated in this part of the feast. We do, however, know that after the banquet was concluded the elder women as well as the men drank pulque, the national beverage, often to a state of intoxication; but the young of both sexes were rigorously excluded from this portion of the entertainment. The youths and maidens danced while their elders drank—a custom which has not wholly ceased in our own civilization; and we can find in the whole proceeding on these festal occasions more likeness to modern entertainments than is found even by the old Spanish writer who tells us that, after the distribution of gifts with which the entertainment came to a close, the guests dispersed, "some commending the feast, and others condemning the bad taste or extravagance of their host, in the same manner as with us."

While the home discipline of children, like that in the public schools, was of a very severe type, the relations of the Aztec maiden to her parents, after she had arrived at maturity, were of the closest and tenderest description. They enjoined upon her, with loving solicitude for her well-being and felicity, simplicity of manners and conversation, personal neatness, modesty of demeanor, and reverence for her husband when she became a wife. They showed her an affection and consideration which were in conformity with the highest type of social culture, and in return were regarded and treated with respect and love.

When the maiden finally attained the dignity of wifehood, her condition was hardly changed. She received from her husband the utmost respect of demeanor, and she was—of course we are considering the women of the

upper classes—freed from all obligation of service. She had maidens to wait upon her and to do the tasks of the household, over which she ruled much as did a feudal chatelaine in the days of chivalry in Europe; and a favorite amusement with the Aztec wives consisted in listening to their maidens rehearse traditionary tales and ballads. When there came to her the further dignity of motherhood, she was the recipient of congratulatory visits from her friends and neighbors—male as well as female—from whom she received gifts of dresses, ornaments, or flowers, in token of sympathy and regard. These visits of ceremony were regulated by a code, unwritten but as thoroughly understood and binding as that which regulates similar forms in our own social world. In short, the Aztec woman, whether as maiden, wife, or mother, received universal acknowledgment of her rightful place in the structure of society and was in almost all respects the peer of her Caucasian sister in status and indeed in civilization.

Most of what has thus far been written is applicable to the women of the lower classes as well as to their richer and more cultured countrywomen, at least so far as concerns the estimation in which they were held and their place in the household and in their appropriate society. Of course, even as with us, the women of the lower classes labored; but their labors were as a rule not severe. The Aztecs were primarily an agricultural people, and their women assisted in the toil necessary to the tillage of the soil, but their labors were of the lighter kinds; they sowed the seed and husked the corn, but they did not reap or garner, while they would doubtless have rebelled in mass had they been required to undertake the more laborious tasks incident to irrigation or actual tillage. Even the slave women, though these of course were doomed to harder service than the wives and daughters

of freemen, were not generally condemned to wearing toil. Indeed, the institution of slavery, except in the cases of prisoners taken in war,—a small class of slaves, since such prisoners were usually sacrificed to the gods,—was milder among the Aztecs than among any people of whom there is historical record; the slave could marry at will, could hold property, and could even possess slaves of his own, while, as has been already said, the child of a slave was independent of the status of his parent.

It is unfortunately true that there can be found but few names of women of importance in the history of the Aztecs or indeed of the Conquest itself; nearly all that is to be learned is general and not particular in its import. Though the blood of many of the women of that period, intermingled with that of the Spanish cavaliers, flows in the veins of a very large number of the Mexicans of to-day, there is yet no trustworthy record of particular names or fames. It is indeed recorded that Alvarado, one of the right-hand men of Cortés, married the daughter of Xicotencatl, a Mexican chief; but she was a Tlascalan, not an Aztec. So, as space would fail in the compass of a large volume to tell of all the civilizations which surrounded that of the Aztecs, and also as Doña Luisa, as she was called by the Spaniards after her baptism into the Christian faith, did nothing more meritorious than to bear to Tonitiuh—"the Sun"—as Alvarado was called by the Mexicans, because of his bright face and golden hair, a number of children who became by intermarriage the sires and mothers of some of the noblest families of Castile, she does not deserve particular chronicle here. It may, however, be well to take advantage of the introduction of this incident to make the statement that marriage between the followers of Cortés and his successors and the native maidens—who must first, as an unalterable

rule, embrace the tenets of Christianity, which had borne its earliest message to them in the flame and steel of the massacre of their parents and kinsmen—was adopted as a matter of policy and resulted in the foundation of many lines which have continued to the present day.

Though there is no typical Aztec woman to present as representative of her sex and country, there is one whose name is so welded with the history of the fall of the Aztec power that a brief sketch of her story may be given here. She was of Mexican birth, but had been sold by her unprincipled mother as a slave, the mother thereby securing for her son by a second marriage the estate which would otherwise have fallen to the girl. When Cortés reached his first harbor on his road to Tenochtitlan, as the Aztec capital was called, the cacique of Tabasco presented him with several slaves, among whom was this girl, called by the Spaniards Doña Marina, and by the Mexicans Malinche. She was of great beauty and of a high degree of intelligence, and she soon came within the notice of Cortés by acting as interpreter for him when he was embarrassed by his inability to communicate with the Aztec embassy. She did not at that time speak Spanish, but she managed to interpret through an intermediary, and she soon became proficient in the language of the men with whom her lot was now thrown, from one of whom she learned more than the Castilian tongue.

The beauty of the young girl, whose charms are said by Spanish writers to have been extraordinary, soon captivated the heart of Cortés, and he first made her his secretary and then his mistress. At least so the fashion of our time would term her, but there can be little doubt that in the eyes of Marina, reared amid traditions of polygamy, there was nothing of wrong in her union with Cortés, and it may be noted that such a good and moral man as

Father Olmedo had for her no word of reproof but rather of blessing. At all events, she openly lived with Cortés as his wife and by him had a son, Don Martin Cortés, acknowledged by his father, and who afterward became *comendador* of the Military Order of Saint Iago.

Marina was a loving, faithful, tenderhearted woman, and she was in all ways true to her Spanish lover and to his countrymen, frequently extricating them from grave difficulties by her advice, given with knowledge of the natures as well as customs of the Mexicans. Perhaps this was only to be expected; but it is remarkable, and speaks volumes for her character, that she was always held in affectionate honor by the Mexicans themselves, though she dwelt in the camp of their oppressors. In truth, Marina time and again used her influence with Cortés on the side of mercy, and she always displayed a profound sympathy with the misfortunes of the Mexicans, notwithstanding the fact that she may have in some ways aided their foes and tyrants. Even though the act which more than aught else struck terror into the souls of the Indians —the cutting off of the hands of fifty Tlascalans, who had come to the camp of Cortés in the garb of ambassadors but were suspected of being spies—was directly traceable to the watchfulness of Marina in the cause of the man she loved, she was never held culpable by the natives for her guardianship, though this resulted so disastrously to those who, if not precisely her countrymen, were assuredly more nearly of consanguineous race than were those whom she defended from them. It was these people too, who, after their desperate but vain struggle with the Spaniards, whose arms and valor proved invincible against overwhelming numbers, were the most faithful allies of Cortés in his battles with the Aztecs. Muñoz Camargo relates that, among other tokens of their friendship, they

presented numbers of "beautiful maidens" to the Conqueror and his companions.

All through the wonderful march to the capital, through the honorable reception accorded to Cortés, through the siege which was the consequence of Spanish treachery, through the "Terrible Night," which saw the banishment of Spanish power for a time from Tenochtitlan, through the long march back to the coast, through all perils, as through all triumphs, Marina stood by the side of her lover, watchful of his welfare, wise in suggestion, tender in helpfulness, in all things a noble type of woman. When the unhappy Montezuma was made prisoner within his own capital, Marina alone of those who surrounded him never forgot the reverence that was due to the monarch, and it was she who nursed him most tenderly when he lay dying under the wounds inflicted by his own outraged subjects. It was she who most uncomplainingly bore the privations of the siege, she who most bravely met the terrors of the "Noche Triste;" and it may be said that it was she more than any other single man or woman, Alvarado and Sandoval not excepted, who helped Cortés to establish the Spanish rule in Mexico.

The question of the gratitude of Cortés for these services and for her love is one that is to be settled by each reader of history according to his own ideas of the form which true appreciation should take. The facts are simple enough. In 1525 she was with the Conqueror at Coatzacualco, the province which could claim the honor of being her birthplace. Here, by accident, she came into contact with her own mother, who had sold her into slavery and who was now naturally terrified at meeting her injured daughter in a situation of power; but Marina, with her natural generosity, embraced her parent, assured her of her forgiveness, and even made her many presents,

apparently in the wish to regain that affection which had once been hers in her babyhood. This was the last time that Marina appears by the side of Cortés; on the expedition to Honduras, made shortly afterward, he gave her away to Don Juan Xamarillo, a knight of Castile, who wedded her according to the rites of the Catholic Church. Here then is the question which each must decide for himself: Was Cortés just and generous in thus making disposition for the honorable and safe future of the woman who loved him, or was he merely ridding himself of one who had grown to be an encumbrance? It is impossible to answer; it is not even known whether the marriage was arranged with the sanction of Marina or whether it was a piece of tyranny on the part of the Conqueror, of venality on the part of Don Juan, of heartbroken docility on the part of Marina. Nor is there any record of the further life of the latter by which to decide the probabilities of her marriage being more than a mere contract; from the time of the completion of the ceremony the gentle Marina fades from the page of history. It is certain indeed that she was given estates in Coatzacualco,—possibly the bribe which induced Don Juan to wed the mistress of his captain,—but it is not even known that she lived to take possession of those estates. Except for the unmerited persecution and shameful torture undergone by her son, Don Martin Cortés, we are never again reminded in history that Marina had lived to be the right hand of one of the greatest conquerors of all time, to prove the most valuable ally found by the fierce enemies of her native land, and yet to be held in lasting honor alike by conquerors and conquered.

Shortly before the marriage of Doña Marina, Cortés's legal wife—a woman of low birth and a drag upon him in his upward career—had come over from the Islands to

New Spain, but she did not live long after her arrival, and her death furnished the later detractors of Cortés with a pretext to attack him in the way that could most deeply and yet safely pierce his defence. This was absurd enough, since Cortés had always treated his wife with affection and consideration; but suspicion was never entirely allayed. The facts of having thus influenced in some degree the fortunes of the Conqueror and of having been one of the first ladies of Spain to die on the shores of New Spain form the only title to mention in this history of Doña Catalina Xuarez.

There are indeed but few names of women associated with the conquest of Mexico, that of Marina standing out preëminent. Yet there were women not a few who exercised a certain influence on the fortunes of the Conqueror and his army, though their names are generally unknown to us. In the second march upon the Mexican capital many of the soldiers had brought their wives with them, and during the stress and storm of the days when Guatemozin was hurling his forces again and again upon the fearfully outnumbered but better armed Spaniards, these women did service in true Amazon style. Not only did they cheer and encourage the downhearted and prick the cowards—though there were very few of the latter in that little army—with the needle of their scorn, but they actually did soldier service as well. When Cortés had besought these women to remain at Tlascala, they had replied that "It was the duty of Castilian wives not to abandon their husbands in danger, but to share it with them, and, if necessary, to die with them." Though some of the names of these heroines have been embalmed in history by Herrera, they have but little meaning for us now; it is more to the point to know that one and all acted to the utmost of their conception of duty and that

some of them mounted guard on the walls in the place of their husbands, while one was said actually to have donned mail at a time of disaster and rallied the retreating troops against the enemy. It cannot be said, however that even these gallant dames showed a higher spirit than did the native women during the same time of battle. The Aztecs were suffering from many evils during the conflict when the Spaniards strove, for long in vain, to take from them their beautiful city. The plague of smallpox was abroad, brought to the Aztecs by a dying negro in the train of Cortés; and that unknown negro proved the most terrible foe of the Aztec nation. Yet, even though they were now dying by hundreds in the streets, while their thinning ranks were being swept by the fire-speaking tubes that weaponed the army of their foes, they fought fiercely on, and their women gave them noble aid and incitement. They stood by the side of the warrior in battle, strung his bow, filled his quiver, gave him fresh stones for his sling; they nursed the sick through all the horrors of the loathsome disease which had fastened upon them; and they did yet more, for they kept their hearts high with hope and determination when even the noblest warriors failed of these things, and so they upheld the hands of Guatemozin, their beloved but most unhappy chief, and upbore the standard of their country to the very end. It was all in vain; the Mexico of that civilization was doomed; but none the less did the women of that day, both pagan and Christian, display qualities which in the fusion of the races in after years should have borne noble fruit.

It is not the purpose of this work to trace the history of any country, save at the points where such history touches the universal story of woman; and so there exists no obligation to present to the reader even the most fragmentary sketch of the progress of Mexico from the rule

of the barbarism of the Aztecs to that of the civilization of the Spaniards. The latter brought with them their own feminine culture, and for long held it apart from the conditions existing among the indigenous inhabitants of the land. Among the women of Spain who took up their abode in Mexico there are names which lend themselves to story; but their histories touched Mexico only as a scenic background, and, moreover, it would be an unfruitful digression to attempt to find any feminine history in the days of Spain's first occupation of Anahuac. The viceroys held their courts with little less than regal splendor, and it cannot be that those courts were unadorned by the presence of women of high claim to remembrance; yet there comes down to us no name of those days touched with the halo of romance or in any way made worthy of memoir. Doubtless the ladies of the viceregal courts flaunted as costly attire and held themselves as haughtily as their sisters in the court of Spain itself; but they passed away and left no trace, even as an influence. For years of varying fortunes but of constant prosperity in high places, Spain held Mexico under dominance, until the oppression of the lower classes began to bear its invariable fruit, and there came first threats, and then acts of rebellion. There was revolution after revolution; but although the unsuccessful revolts bequeathed to history the names of such men as Hidalgo and Morelos, and the successful attempt to throw off the galling yoke of Spain, the names of Yturbide and Santa Anna, there comes down to us even from these later times the name of not one woman of renown. Moreover, there is but little in the way of development and change which is found for record. Long before the expulsion of the Spaniard, the Mexican people had come to be recognized as a nation, not merely descendants of the Spaniards, but a people of self-gained

characteristics. Mexico was no longer New Spain; she was herself, even as, a few years before, a greater country on her borders had come to be itself in the matter of nationality, even before it had gained autonomy. To be a Mexican woman was not merely to be a lesser Spaniard, but to be something definite, something individual. Some of the older national traits had become developed, some atrophied; but long before Mexico had achieved her independence, the Mexican woman had attained her own freedom from Spanish dominance in matters of custom, thought, and even heredity.

Yet it cannot be said that there was progress. There was fixed development of nationality as displayed in the establishment of a characteristic femininity, but there was no evolution toward a higher type of individual or of civilization than had been known in the days of the coming of the Spaniards. On the contrary, there may be said to have been retrogression. The woman of Mexico—by which name we must now distinguish the descendants of the Spaniards, while those of Aztec blood, or descendants from any of the native tribes, may be called generically Indians—retained as a rule neither the activity and courage of the wives of the *conquistadores* nor the graces and dignity of the dames of the viceregal courts. After the establishment of Mexican independence there came as first ambassador from Spain, in 1839, Señor Don Calderon de la Barca; and this gentleman brought with him his very accomplished wife. Madame Calderon, as is the case with most women, was an indefatigable letter-writer, especially when she was amid new conditions; and to a number of her letters, written with no intent of publication, but most vivid and entertaining in their presentation of the chief characteristics of Mexican social life, is owing much of the present-day knowledge of Mexican existence in the early

part of the nineteenth century, when that existence had begun to be acknowledged as national and individual. There is no period better adapted than this to the purpose of finding and fixing a typical Mexican woman, for it was the time when the women of Anahuac had emerged from the imitation of Spanish characteristics and customs into a national female existence as well as type, and it was before their briefly held individuality failed beneath the incursions of a northern civilization which has been so universally destructive of national type wherever it has set foot.

Consideration of the characteristics of the Mexican woman of the forties may be begun with an extract from the letters of Madame Calderon. She is speaking of society women in Mexico, and she says: "I must put aside exceptions which are always rising up before me, and write *en masse*. Generally speaking, the Mexican señoras and señoritas write, read, and play a little; sew, and take care of their houses and children. When I say they read, I mean they know how to read; when I say they write, I do not mean that they can always spell; and when I say they play, I do not assert that they have a general knowledge of music. The climate inclines everyone to indolence, both physical and moral. One cannot pore over a book when the blue sky is constantly smiling in at the open windows." This language reads as the words of one who is reluctantly compelled to tell the whole truth and then seeks to withdraw or at least palliate the accusation which she has brought. It is entirely plain that at the time of Madame Calderon ignorance and sloth were the prevailing feminine characteristics among those who sat in high places. It is true that the chronicler goes on to say that the Mexican women generally made good wives and affectionate mothers; but even in this matter she does not

strike us as speaking from conviction. However this may be, she is certainly at no loss to characterize the taste in dress displayed by the "fine ladies" upon festal occasions. Describing one of these, she writes: "Here was to be seen a group of ladies, some with black gowns and mantillas, others, now that their church-going duty was over, equipped in velvet or satin, with their hair dressed —and beautiful hair they have; some leading their children by the hand, dressed—alas, how were they dressed! Long, velvet gowns trimmed with blonde, diamond earrings, high French caps furbelowed with lace and flowers, or turbans with plumes of feathers. Now and then, the head of a little thing that could hardly waddle alone might have belonged to an English dowager-duchess in her opera-box. Some had extraordinary bonnets, and as they toddled along, top-heavy, one would have thought they were little old women, without a glimpse caught of their lovely little brown faces and blue eyes."

Though again Madame Calderon very kindly bestows her criticism upon the dresses of the children rather than those of the mothers, even a mere man can guess what must have been the appearance of the mothers who had chosen thus to dress their offspring.

It is not, however, among the higher classes of city-dwellers that one should seek for the most characteristic aspects of the life of a nation. These city-dwellers, and especially the female moiety of them, are apt to be mere imitators of other cultures, shaping their lives, as their costumes, in obedience to the dictates of some other land, higher in the scale of fashion. It is to the country, the *terris* as distinguished from the *urbis,* that one must go to obtain the truth of female life in Mexico or any other land; for, though fashion may hold sway here also, it is less apt to overcome national taste and custom.

Female life on the great estates of Mexico, the *haciendas,* in the first days of the republic was in a measure characteristic and individual—more so, at least, than at any time since the days of the first coming of the Spaniards. To some extent there was a continuance of the customs of the race which had dwelt in Anahuac before the coming of the invaders, the customs being modified by the conditions and needs of the new time. Among the upper classes, there was no costume peculiar to the country, save that nearly all wore the graceful veil in lieu of the hideous European headdress of the period. There was, however, then as now, a decided love for garishness of color among the Mexican women, and there was but little display of taste in the direction of costume.

The mistress of a large hacienda was somewhat in the position of one of the European "ladies of the castle" in feudal days; but as a rule—though, of course, the stated rules had many exceptions—she did not occupy herself in the same manner as did the feudal chatelaine. She was apt to be ignorant and lazy; she passed the greater part of the day in idling upon the *azotea,* as was called the roof-garden which crowned most of the long and low houses of the Mexican country estates, perhaps rolling and smoking her cigarettes,—for the Mexican ladies were inveterate smokers,—or perhaps writing a *papelcito* to be sent to her lover in appointment of a tryst. This latter if she were young and handsome; if she were old—and no daughter of Anahuac passed the Rubicon of forty and retained her beauty in even the most modified form—she might reflect on her sins, which probably gave her some little uneasiness, or she might rehearse them into the ears of her confessor, or she might do aught that called for no exertion, of mind or body. Of the latter she would never be guilty, and the former she abhorred to an almost equal extent. There

were, however, marked exceptions to the rule of inactivity of body in the persons of certain señoritas who could ride like Comanches and throw a *lazo* almost as well as their lovers and brothers, and who delighted in the display of these, their chief and perhaps only accomplishments. These ladies, however, were in the minority; the rule of Mexican female life was passivity, not to say sloth.

As in the case of their predecessors, so with the women of modern Mexico, consideration has been accorded chiefly to those of the upper class. There was, however, until recently a very large and significant class in Mexico called *peons,* who might be said roughly to answer to the servitors of European feudal times. This class was composed chiefly or entirely of those of native Indian blood, the descendants of the races enslaved by the Spaniards and set free so late in the history of Mexico as even now hardly to have lost in all respects the characteristics of slavery. These peons form the servitor class on the great haciendas, and are almost retainers of the wealthy proprietors. Their women are of widely different type from the señoras who form the bulk of the upper classes; and the same difference which exists to-day was even more determined in the days of the youth of the Mexican republic. So constant, indeed, have been the individualities of this people that it matters little whether we look at them in the past or in the present; as is generally the case with classes which represent the lower strata of the population and are from their very unimportance in the social scale less affected by outer influences and therefore more steadfast to national type, the peon class has altered but little in its peculiar customs and characteristics, these being modified only as is rendered necessary to meet the changes in material conditions which have from time to time occurred. In this peon class are encountered many

recurrent and persistent customs of the Aztec civilization; but as these instances do not strongly affect the life of the women they may be passed over. That which it is needful to note, however, is the fact that always in the history of feminine Mexico it is these women, of truly native stock, who have formed the characteristically native class. It is they who have had and held a settled and constant tradition and custom; it is they who have conserved an individuality which has come down to them from mingled cultures—from that of the Aztecs, with their paradoxical civilization and nature, and that of the Spanish intruders, with their Latin characteristics modified by new environment. The mingling of these cultures produced the true Mexican individuality.

Yet, though individuality was at the time of the foundation of the republic to be found most decisive in the peon class, it may be broadly said that at that period the Mexican woman was generally characteristic and individual. She reproduced and accentuated many Spanish traits; she was gay beneath a mask of propriety, immoral —the rule of generalities must be remembered—under the cloak of a profound piety, vengeful and jealous under the garb of a real love, and in all ways was the emphasis of the Spanish woman of her time. She was more than that, however; she had her national and even racial traditions and characteristics which parted from the Castilian culture at certain points and turned to the old fount of the Aztec racial influence. She was more profoundly superstitious than her Spanish sister, and she was more concerned with outer guise in all matters of morality or religion. She would not for the world miss her accustomed attendance at mass, but she did not fail to recognize the opportunities offered by the ceremonial, with its genuflections and its periods of rest, for the transmittal of notes of amorous

inspiration, and many was the *billet d'amour* which was slipped by a tiny hand into a broader palm as the respective owners thereof bowed in apparently deep reverence at the elevation of the Host. Among the higher classes, the Mexican señora and señorita were far less educated and cultivated than their Spanish kindred; yet among the lower classes—not the peons, but the shopkeeper class in the cities, the small landholders in the country—education of a kind was further advanced in Mexico than in Spain. Most interesting in certain ways, though least individual of all, was this middle class, wearing as their festal costume, "white embroidered gowns, with white satin shoes and neat feet and ankles, *rebozos,* or bright shawls, thrown over their heads;" while the peasants on the same occasions were dressed in "short petticoats of two colors, generally scarlet and yellow, with thin satin shoes and lace-trimmed chemises." Stockings, it may be noticed, are not referred to in either case; sixty years ago they were not considered at all *de rigueur* in the costume of a Mexican woman of any but the very highest class—and, if we are to believe all travellers, not even invariably among the señoritas themselves.

The Mexican woman of the dawn of the republic was a type—indefinite, even elusive, amid the crowd of southern Latin nationalities, yet possessing some distinctive traits of manner, custom, and nature, and by these to be distinguished from her Italian, Spanish, or even South American kinswomen. But the individuality which she possessed, never strongly marked, soon began to fade before the incursion of a northern culture, with its novel ideals, standards, and requisites. When the United States was at war with Mexico, the type of the latter culture was at its most distinctive stage; and, though there were not a few of the women who were enamored of the methods of

the northern invaders and became *Ayankeados,* as sympathizers with the foe were contemptuously termed, yet, as a rule, the women of Mexico proved true daughters of Anahuac in their hatred of the enemy of their native land. But these passions passed away with the coming of peace; and the Maximilian episode served to bring Mexico into somewhat closer relation with the civilization of her northern border neighbor. Still the national culture, if so it can be called, remained practically unaffected for years after the founding of the republic; for the purely Spanish families had been banished in large numbers, and the Maximilian rule was too brief to effect a new Latin invasion.

But there was an invasion lowering upon the horizon of Mexico, though foreseen perhaps by few, which was destined to prove most effectual in influencing the future of the Mexican woman—the invasion of the Anglo-American in peaceful guise, armed with scrip and not with stave, and bearing the axe and spade in his hands. The wealth of Mexico began to attract the attention of the citizens of her northern neighbor, and they kindly hastened to relieve her of as much as she found at all burdensome—and they themselves decided the discomfort of that burden. The typical American, the American *par excellence,* he of the United States, invaded Mexico once more, though this time in search of dollars, not glory; and under his influence, perhaps yet more under that of his wife and daughters, the feminine civilization of Mexico lost its individuality in its acceptance of standards which were unfitted to its conditions and unacceptable to its traditions. The woman of Mexico forgot her history and her very nature, and became, in the majority of cases, a mere imitator of Anglo-Saxon and Gallic fashion and custom. Once she smoked her dainty cigarette with entire nonchalance;

now, even though her English and North American sisters have found a charm in the nicotian incense that is offered to the god of social converse, your Mexican woman, having long since been told solemnly that "*Las Americanas* do not smoke," has thrown away her little roll of paper and tobacco, and has become "proper" according to standards with which she should have nothing in common. She has doffed her *rebozo*—that which might have been termed the national garment of the Mexican woman—and has accepted the less graceful and becoming garments of European fashion. In all outer guise, she is steadfastly setting herself to become a mere imitation, if not a caricature, of the belles of other civilizations; but within she is still the child of the South, the daughter of a race of Indians, dashed indeed with Spanish blood but preserving many of the Indian characteristics intact; and these do not agree with normal culture. For it must be remembered that in Mexico there is to-day, owing to the wholesale expulsion of the Spaniards at the establishment of independence, hardly a family of unmixed blood; and those who do claim uncontaminated descent from the Spanish *hidalgos* are looked upon with utmost disfavor—almost ostracized, indeed. On the other hand, the Mexicans have come to look upon Americans of the North with respect and even affection, and to welcome them to their country and often to their homes. The result, of course, has been partly to establish a heterogeneous culture, neither Spanish, Indian, nor American, and yet a commingling of all three, at least in outward form. But beneath the veneer of the new culture the Mexican woman preserves the characteristics which have been hers for centuries and which in their greater part came down to her from her Indian forebears. She is still passionate, jealous, vengeful, sudden and violent in all her impulses, most of which are founded

upon that which she calls her love, but which, as a rule, is but passion. Her traditions do not agree with her surroundings as she would fain make them; and the question as to which will finally survive in permanent conquest is one that can be answered by time alone, that convenient arbitrator to which to refer all vexed questions of this sort. To that tribunal may be left the questions for the future which have been suggested to thoughtful readers concerning the Mexican woman.

Chapter III

The Women of South America

III

THE WOMEN OF SOUTH AMERICA

AS in our retrospect of the feminine history of Mexico, so in our review of the past of the women of South America, it is necessary to begin with a consideration of an extinct civilization,—necessary not only to the completeness but to the interest of our subject, for the chief claim of these chapters to the reader's attention rests on the consideration of those primitive cultures. Were it not for the dead civilizations of the Aztecs and the Incas, with their surrounding and dependent cultures, there would be but little to say concerning the women of Mexico or South America. For in their later aspects these American cultures represent simply a more or less decadent Spanish and Portuguese civilization, modified indeed by circumstance and the infusion of alien blood as well as custom, yet so close in all material respects to the parent stock that there is but little of variance worthy of note, while even the variations from the modern types are most frequently the result of the influence of the dead civilizations which still live in the stock which was grafted upon them, though only upon their dead trunks.

Even as for long the history of the eastern coast was that of North America, so at first the story of Peru was all of true history that we find of the southern division of our continent. Yet closer in likeness is the story of Peru to

that of Mexico; there is the same tale of a high, and in many respects admirable, civilization overthrown and practically destroyed by Spanish lust for gold, and yet in some wise abiding in influence upon the race which had crushed it. There is the same record of a mild race yielding to the strength of one armed for conquest; but in the case of the culture of the Incas the contrast between conquerors and conquered is still more marked to the advantage of the Peruvians, for they were of even gentler and more refined natures than the Aztecs, influenced by a higher and purer religion and dwelling under a system which encouraged and developed the noblest tendencies of human nature. There were among the Peruvians fewer paradoxes and contradictions of culture than among the Aztecs; they were not given to even the refined forms of cannibalism indulged in by their northern brethren, nor did they include human sacrifice as a part of their cult. Their religion was a pure and somewhat simple sun-worship; indeed, the Incas themselves claimed to be children of the sun. In other respects, there were many points of approach between the civilization of the Peruvians and that of the Aztecs; they might be roughly called cultures of the same class, though where there lay advantage it was usually, especially in matters which were of the ethical rather than the material cultivation, on the side of the Peruvians.

As might be expected in such a state of culture, woman held among the Peruvians a high place; one that might, in a further rough estimate, be regarded as equal to the status of woman among the Aztecs. In this comparison, however, the advantage is again found on the side of the Peruvians, woman being, in some respects, in higher estimation among them than among their northern compeers. Without pushing the comparison,—indeed, it is less

dangerous to speak positively,—let us glance at the chief features of feminine life among the people of the Incas. In the first place, we find that even in the religion of the Peruvians woman held an honored place. The sun was the chief personage in the theogony of the Peruvians; but he had his satellites, and among them the most important was the moon, his sister and wife. In this union of a god to his sister we are reminded of the Egyptian cult, wherein Osiris was married to Isis, and it is somewhat curious that in both nations, Egyptian and Peruvian, wherein there obtained this feature of incest elevated to sacred places, there was also the introduction of the same offence against nature in the royal house; for both Peruvian Inca and Egyptian Pharaoh were given to marrying their sisters, that the royal race might be preserved uncontaminated by any alien strain.

The religion thus acknowledged the status of woman by giving her a place among its deities; nor did it stop at this point, though, as is so frequently to be found in primitive cults, it mingled the sacred and the profane in a manner rather confusing to our more complex modern thought. The institution of the "Virgins of the Sun" was in some ways a most singular reproduction of the Roman Vestal and the Catholic nun, and in others the exact opposite of the intentions of these European types. The Virgins of the Sun were young maidens who from their infancy had been dedicated to the service of their deity, and who, when very young, were placed in convents. Here they were instructed by elderly matrons called *mamaconas,* who taught them religious theory and duty as well as the material arts of spinning, embroidery, and other occupations suited to their sex and situation. These maidens were usually selected from those of royal blood or from the daughters of the greater nobles, though a girl of great

beauty would sometimes be raised from the ranks of the commonalty to the high dignity of a Virgin of the Sun. Their life was strictly conventual; no one but the Inca himself, or his queen, could enter the consecrated precincts without having duties to call them thither. Chastity was most strongly inculcated, and it is said that no lapse was ever known on the part of an inmate of these convents. This is not so surprising when the provisions of the law of the Incas on this subject are recalled. The offending virgin was to be buried alive, her lover was to be strangled, and the town or village in which he resided was to be utterly destroyed and "sown with stones," that it might be effectually forgotten. It would take an enterprising and desperate lover indeed to dare such results, even could he have overcome the difficulties of access and the reluctance of his mistress.

Yet, with all this strict regard for chastity on the part of the consecrated virgins, it was only while the latter were inhabitants of the cloister that they were so rigorously bound. Indeed, their destiny was to be brides of the Inca; and thus the whole system was but a sort of sacred concubinage, and it may be suspected that in the eyes of the framers of the severe law above cited it was less the offence against purity than that against the Inca that called for such heavy penalties. When the Virgins of the Sun attained a fitting age, they were, if sufficiently beautiful, sent to the seraglio of the Inca. The number of these royal concubines at times amounted to thousands, and it is not improbable that to the majority of them a visit from the monarch was unknown. They lived in sumptuous seclusion at the various royal palaces scattered throughout the country, guarded and attended by the trusted officers of the Inca, until the monarch determined, as periodically happened, to reduce his establishment in

this respect, when a large number of his "brides" were sent away. They did not return to the conventual institutions from which they had come, but to the home of their childhood, where they lived in state befitting those who had been the spouses, even if only theoretically, of the monarch. Nor did these ladies suffer any loss of good repute for their past; on the contrary, they were held in reverence as having been admitted into such close relation with the Child of the Sun. It does not appear whether they were allowed to contract ordinary marriages after their dismissal from the royal harem; but it is not probable that this was permitted to those who might still be termed brides of the Inca, however he might be pleased to dispense with their society for a time.

Besides the place of woman in the cult of the country, she had high position in the dynastic as well as domestic polity and customs of the land. Notwithstanding the number of concubines possessed by the Inca, there was but one legal queen, the *Coya,* whose eldest son inherited the crown,—at least so say most authorities, although there are some dissentients,—and it is stated by the Inca historian that the succession came down in unbroken line through the whole dynasty. The Coya was always a sister of the ruling Inca; but as to this custom there are also diverse statements, some authorities claiming that it was of comparatively modern innovation, while others assert that it was as ancient as the dynasty itself, which assertion there seems to be but little reason to doubt. The Coya received all due reverence from her people, noble and common; but she had no real authority, however great may have been her influence. The so-called *Loi Salique* was in force among the Peruvians, even though they had never heard of the original heresy concerning the sceptre and distaff. They acknowledged no female rule; at the death of the

Inca the sceptre passed to his eldest son by the Coya, provided that the heir-apparent had successfully passed through an ordeal of great severity, imposed upon him as the test of his fitness to bear the toil of ruling, while his investiture with that which answered to knighthood among the Christian cultures was imposing and wonderfully impressive in its significance.

It is commonly said that polygamy was customary among the Peruvians; but this statement may be strongly doubted. It is entirely true that the nobles had large seraglios; but, when the open concubinage that was a prerequisite, as it were, of royalty is taken into consideration, together with the fact that polygamy was not known among the common people, it is far more likely that the real custom was that of open and legal concubinage rather than true polygamy. The confounding of nearly related facts in this wise is too common to make us chary of attributing such confusion; even to this day many well-informed writers are given to stating that polygamy among the Mussulmans is unrestrained, whereas no Mussulman can have more than a fixed and small number of wives, all the other women in his harem being merely legal concubines. Because of this rashness of statement as well as of the difficulty of ascertaining the precise facts in regard to Peruvian domestic polity, we may assume that monogamy was the legal custom, with a recognized concubinage as the privilege of the nobility as well as of the monarch, since this theory best consorts with the facts as we know them. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that among the Peruvians, speaking of them in general and not as divided into classes and castes, domesticity was on a plane fully equalling that known to any of the primitive cultures of America or even of Europe. Marriage was regarded as a sacred relation, and adultery

was considered one of the most heinous of crimes, being punishable with death. In this and other places, however, it must be borne in mind that in speaking of the old Peruvian civilization, the word "punishable" is necessarily used instead of the more positive "punished"; for it does not seem that all the laws were straitly enforced. It was, for example, a singular provision of this law that made no distinction between adultery and fornication, both being equally visitable by death; yet there was a recognized, if not legalized, system of prostitution in the cities of the Incas. Such a contradiction of facts casts a very grave suspicion upon the integrity of the whole of the code in which that contradiction appears; and it may therefore be supposed that much of the legislation of the Incas was allowed to remain a dead letter. Still, the tendency of thought among a people can frequently be discovered by a study of their statute-book, even if the laws be not implicitly enforced; and we may judge from the laws of the Incas that the people over whom they ruled were straitly moral according to their lights, which is all that can justly be demanded of any people, even the most civilized.

The other facts pertaining to the status of women in that wonderful civilization which Pizarro destroyed may be well summed up within the scope of a paragraph. The women of the Peruvians knew a domestic lot which was strongly akin to that held by their Aztec contemporaries. They were reared in affection, though with some severity, and they were early taught the principles of chastity, modesty, and reverence for parents and religion, as well as the more material knowledge that enters into the life of the normal woman of all cultures: housewifery, needlework, and certain of the arts pertaining to the household. The Peruvian maiden was well fitted for the responsibilities and dignities of wifehood ere she was allowed to

assume that place of honor; and the occasion of her marriage was marked by a ceremony so quaint and original that it deserves special mention. The Peruvian maidens could not choose their own marriage day; this was appointed by law, and only once did it come in a year, so that each twelvemonth there was a season of bridal rejoicing throughout the land. Those who were desirous of being married assembled on this stated day in the public square of their respective cities, and their hands were joined by a cacique in face of the people. This simple ceremony, together with the pronouncement of the contract by the cacique, constituted a marriage. The gentile system was, in some sort, in force among the Peruvians, and no one was allowed to contract marriage with any but a member of his or her gens; but this rule was capable of broad extension, even to including those residing in the same province. The ceremony was followed by festivities lasting several days; and the fact of all weddings being simultaneous turned the whole land into a festal place. We are not told what was done when some one was so inconsiderate as to die during this period and thus interfere with the merriment of his particular kindred; probably the corpse was compelled to wait until its turn came and grief could legitimately take the place of joy. However this may be, it is certain that marriage was in all ways held in high respect by the Peruvians, and divorce was almost or quite unknown. For the rest, the lot of the Peruvian woman was practically the same as that held by the woman of the Aztecs and does not call for amplification.

There is, however, another primitive civilization of South America which calls for notice, as being in its way as interesting as that of the Peruvians, and moreover of greater importance to the present, since in some aspects

it still survives. This was the civilization of the Araucanians, to adopt the general, though not absolutely correct nomenclature. While the more remarkable civilization of the early Peruvians has centred general attention upon itself among the primitive cultures of South America, that of the Araucanians was hardly less wonderful in certain aspects, though as an absolute culture it was far below the standard of its more northern compeer. The Araucanians were simply Indians, but Indians of a very remarkable class. Among the tribes of North America their nearest peers would probably be found among the Navajos; but the Araucanians were in many respects far superior to their brothers of the northern plains. They were, above all, warriors, and for long they successfully resisted the Spanish invasion. They were a free, restless, brave, and highly independent people, and far better fitted for survival than their more highly cultured neighbors, and this they have proved by resistance to the ill effects of eastern civilization and a persistence unto this day.

It may be succinctly said that, while the status of the Araucanian woman was far from being equal to that of her Peruvian or Aztec sister, she was yet held in higher esteem than was usual among most Indian tribes. One of the manifestations of the racial instincts of the Araucanians is to be found in their delight in that which is generally and contemptuously denoted "finery." The women as well as the men painted their faces: not after the manner of civilization, but after that of savagery, the colors used being red and black, and with pigments of these hues the Araucanian belle decorated her face, using the black chiefly for emphasis of the eyebrows, eyelashes, and eyelids, much in the manner in which henna is used by Oriental women. A curious use of the black paint was the occasional depiction of sable tears rolling down the cheeks.

Silver and beads were much worn,—for silver was almost as common as stone among the aborigines of Chili,—and bright colors were profusely used in the dress of the Araucanian lady of social standing. The most distinctive part of the costume of the Araucanian belle was her headdress and the manner of wearing the hair, the former being composed entirely of beads, and coming low upon the forehead, while it passed over the head and descended quite low on the back; the hair was worn in two queues, which were wound with bright colored beads, the ends falling over the face or sticking out in front like horns.

As among most Indian races, polygamy prevailed among the Araucanians. To the women fell the greater part of the work; indeed, it would not be overstating the case to assert that the wife did all the labor in the Araucanian household, even to those offices which the Indian of the northern continent generally performed for himself. Yet the women of the Araucanians were not ill treated as a rule. Marriage by capture prevailed, though there was about it also the elements of marriage by purchase. The friends of the wooer sought the father of the girl and requested his consent to the match; but this was rather a matter of form to even more than the usual extent, since while the father was thus being flattered the lover was searching for his bride. Invading the sanctity of her chamber and plucking her forth, by the hair or heels, as was most convenient,—for the Araucanian was somewhat strenuous in his wooing,—he threw her upon his horse and galloped off with her *à la* Lochinvar, leaving his friends to sustain the attacks of the women, who always rallied fiercely to the defence of the bride. The latter made it a point of honor, indeed, to scream loudly for help; and, however doubtful may have been her good faith, the other women considered it a duty to their sex to accept

her protests as implicit and to visit her rape upon the heads of the allies of the lover, which allies rarely escaped with unscarred faces. Having covered the retreat of the ardent swain, the friends then followed him to the sylvan haunts which he sought for concealment and from which he emerged some two or three days later with his captive, now a willing bride. No other ceremony was needful; but, if the parents of the girl were really averse to the match and rallied in time to prevent the wooer from gaining the shelter of the woods with his captive, there was no marriage; if, on the other hand, the thicket was safely gained, the marriage could not be afterward annulled. After the emergence of the wedded pair from their solitude, the friends of the husband called upon him to congratulate him and to offer him gifts, most of which had been pledged beforehand. These presents were then conveyed in procession to the father of the bride, who, if he considered that he had been paid full value for his daughter, took the bridegroom by the hand and declared his delight at the alliance. The mother, however, was supposed to be so angered with her son-in-law for the robbery of her child that she would not even speak to him or so much as look at him; and though she generally relented so far as to tell her daughter to ask her husband if he were not hungry, and upon receiving an affirmative answer proceeded to cook a feast for the assembled company, nevertheless for years after the marriage she would never speak face to face with her son-in-law, though with her back turned to him she would converse with him with entire freedom. This formal resentment on the part of the mother-in-law seems to indicate a recognized status on the part of the *mater familias,* since it was theoretically in opposition to the will of the *pater familias* and therefore in some sense a declaration of independence.

Divorce was known among the Araucanians, and the discarded wife was sent back to her father's house with full liberty to marry whom else she would; but in such case the second husband was compelled to pay to the first the full price which the woman originally cost him. When a man died his widow became independent, except where there were surviving sons by another wife, who in such case could claim their father's widow as a concubine to be held in common. This singular custom doubtless arose from the theory of the woman being a chattel of the estate and reverting by right to the heirs. Adultery was punished on the woman by death, while if the outraged husband took the guilty paramour *in flagrante delicto* he could slay him without incurring any penalty; if, however, the man escaped, he could not afterward be killed with impunity, but could be made to pay to the injured husband the original cost of the wife. It seems highly probable, however, that among the early Araucanians female virtue was of a high standard, though among their descendants it is not quite so highly esteemed.

A somewhat curious custom, still in force among the Araucanians, was that of borrowing children. A sterile woman was an object of reproach, as has been the case among all primitive peoples, and she was likely to forfeit the consideration of her husband and to be supplanted by a new wife who might bear him children. It was to guard against this as far as possible—as well as for protection, since sterility was cause for divorce—that the barren Araucanian wife would often borrow from some complacent and prolific kinswoman one or more of her children, whom the sterile wife would rear as her own. The exact status of these children in the household is not clear; they would seem to have been attributed by courtesy, as it were, to the wife, but not to have stood as heirs to the

husband unless in default of heirs of his body, nor even then except by express testamentary act, or that which bore the value of such act, on his part. Yet the fact that the custom existed and still exists is sufficient to show that it must in some way have assured the position of the barren wife. The Araucanians, by the way, notwithstanding a statement to the contrary by Molinos, swathe their children as do most Indian tribes, and they even tie their infants to a bamboo frame so tightly that the little unfortunates have no control over any portion of their bodies save their eyes, and in this state they are hung upon the walls when it is desirable to get them out of the way—an occurrence so frequent that the infants pass nearly their whole existence hung upon pegs like unhappy *lares*.

One curious Araucanian custom, surviving to the present time among many of the tribes, is that of giving to each wife a separate fireplace, at which she did her own cooking. Of course this was not practicable where the house was small and the wives were many; but so well was the custom established, in theory at least, that the polite manner in which to inquire the number of wives a man had was to ask him, "How many fires do you burn?" The houses, by the way, were often shaped much like an inverted boat, and the interior was furnished with a row of cane partitions which roughly carried out the maritime idea, as they had somewhat the appearance of staterooms. These were arranged on each side, and in the middle ran the row of fires around which squatted the ladies of the household. It must not, however, be imagined that only one family, as we understand the word, inhabited one house; on the contrary, each of the married sons had his portion of the paternal rooftree, and often there were as many as a dozen households under one roof. These matters

varied with the geographical position of the tribe, the Indians of the north differing from their southern brothers much as the Indians of the eastern part of North America differed from those of the west; and the household which has just been described was typical rather of those of the south than those of the north, though some of the features were identical in both sections.

One of the most remarkable facts concerning the status of women among the Araucanians was that there were medicine women as well as medicine men, and that the former were generally held in higher repute than their male rivals. While this belief in women as peculiarly adapted to the pursuit of sorcery has been prevalent among many peoples, those of white blood as well as those of black, it is rare among Indian races.

The civilization of the Araucanians, both past and present, is among the most interesting of the social developments of American origin, and is, perhaps, the one which has survived in truest individuality. Little record is found of individuals; but two historical facts may be cited concerning the women of the great Indian race of the south—facts illustrative of the spirit which was inculcated into females as well as males and born of the indomitable love of liberty which was the fundamental characteristic of the Araucanians.

When Caupolican, one of the greatest of the Araucanian leaders in their long struggle against the Spaniards, was at last taken prisoner, his chief wife, on learning of his capture, hastened to his side; not, as might be expected by those of less Spartan culture, to alleviate his captivity with her tenderness, but to upbraid him for his pusillanimity in being taken alive. Coming into his presence, she threw at his feet their infant son, saying, passionately and scornfully, *No quiero titulo de madre del hijo infame.*

del infame padre! [I do not wish to be called the mother of the infamous son of an infamous father!] At least, that is what she is reported to have said; but as the Spanish is in rhyme, and the chronicler was one rather given to romance, we may be permitted to doubt the implicitness of the narrative in this respect; yet it is most probable that the incident really occurred, since it would have been in entire conformity with the fierce pride of the Araucanians.

The other woman of whom Araucanian history tells us was called Janaqueo. She was the head wife of a chief who was defeated and slain by the Spanish invaders. As soon as she learned of the death of her husband she organized a band of Puelche Indians, was chosen their chief, and sallied forth against the enemy. She proved herself a most skilful leader in the peculiar fighting which was appropriate to the terrain; she hung on the flanks of her foes as a hound on a clumsy boar, alternately fighting and disappearing, and even in pitched battle defeating more than one noted Spanish general. She was one of the most enterprising and dangerous foes ever encountered by the invaders; and when at last she was conquered through her affection for her brother,—who, having been taken captive and condemned to death, was enlarged on condition that his sister retired to her distant home,—the Spaniards felt that they had won a victory which was most important, even though the forces of the Amazon still held the field against them. There can be no doubt that Janaqueo was a most skilful and valiant general; and she relieves the Araucanian nation from the aspersion of being the only people that cannot claim a national Joan of Arc to play against the French heroine.

Before turning to a consideration of South American women as descended from Spanish civilization, it may be well to say a word concerning a most singular class of

natives of South America—one which, happily, may be dismissed in a few words, but yet which must be mentioned for the sake of completeness,—the Gauchos. There may be a question as to the right of the Gaucho women to occupy even a minor place in a history of the development of woman; for the feminine Gaucho has but one individual characteristic. She is dirty, she is slovenly, she is lazy, she is a mere animal, a slave, a beast of burden, but all these things may be found in other extant or past civilizations,—to give them a term of courtesy,—and it would seem hardly needful to bring to the reader's attention a peculiar people if the qualities mentioned were the only ones to be found among these women. But this is not so, for the Gaucho woman has a preëminence in one respect: she is absolutely the most unmoral woman upon the face of the earth, and she has been so ever since her singular class came into recognized existence. This does not say she is immoral; her depravity is too open, too much a matter of course, too entirely a condition of her existence to be deemed immorality. It has been said that it is a wise child who knows his own father; but among the Gauchos it was a remarkable woman who had any assured ideas as to the father of any particular one of her children. Marriage existed as a form of possession; but as all Gaucho women who had reached maturity had families,—and maturity in that climate came at about the age of twelve,—whether they had gone through the ceremony of marriage or not, it will be understood that few Gauchos, male or female, ever thought of troubling to be formally wedded. Sir Francis Head, who, about the opening of the last century, wrote a most entertaining account of his travels across the Andes and Pampas, tells us that if one asked a young Gaucho señorita who might be the father of the child that she was carrying, the almost invariable and entirely artless

reply would be, *"Quien sabe?"* and though Lieutenant Strain, who followed in the footsteps of Sir Francis some fifty years later, contradicted the latter's account of the surliness and fierceness of the male Gaucho, he did not find it lie in his mouth to defend the virtue of the women.

Such absolute, universal, and unblushing unmorality as this is worthy of chronicle and really is hardly shocking, since it is so perfectly matter of fact that it simply resolves itself into a rule of life alien from our ideas. Yet, on the other hand, it is not as the unmorality of the natives of the South Sea islands, for example, where in their primitive state the retention of that which among us is known as womanly virtue was considered a reproach; for the Gaucho women, though so frankly unmoral, yet were not thus by religion and custom. On the contrary, the Gauchos were usually profoundly superstitious and were apt to be devout members of the Roman Communion. Had they been pagans, they would not have acquired any especial claim to renown for immorality by their customs; but as members, by courtesy, of a Christian civilization the women of the Gauchos deserve to be embalmed in the history of their sex as superlative in their national unmorality.

Mention of the women of the South Sea islands leads to another digression from the main subject, for there are one or two interesting facts to be told about these women. The customs of the Taeehs, one of the most powerful of the tribes of the Pacific islanders, may be taken as typical of the others, though, of course, there are points of variance and even departure. When Porter, the captain of the famous *Essex,* visited the island of Nookahevah during his celebrated cruise in 1812, he found that island governed by a princess named Pittenee—a fact which shows that among the islanders women were held in some esteem. The lady, potentate though she was, was not above forming

a scandalous connection with one of Porter's officers, though she displayed no fidelity to her temporary spouse; but nothing better could be expected of one of a race where the parents urged their daughters to sacrifice their virtue to strangers and even rewarded with presents those who did them the honor to accept that virtue in gift. Indeed, the claims of hospitality required the proffer of the person of wife or sister to the guest, while before reaching marriageable age—about nineteen, very late for such a climate—the young girls were given entire license. There was marriage among these people, though it is difficult to see why; and, strange to say, post-nuptial unfaithfulness was rare. The married women, as usual among primitive peoples, were rather chattels than slaves, being entirely at the disposition of their husbands; indeed, save in the matter of unmorality, the customs of the islanders in regard to their women differed but little from those conventional among barbarous tribes.

It is now time to turn to a consideration of the women of South America as we usually think of them, the product of a grafted Spanish civilization rather than a survival or result of primitive cultures. Yet when we turn to such consideration we find but little that is characteristic or even interesting. It is not to Spanish-founded countries that we must look for the greatest advances in the status or culture of women; in such lands there has ever been stagnation and even retrogression, while there has rarely been any marked individuality of personal or national trait. Nor must it be forgotten that the phrase "the Women of South America," even in the limited meaning of those of Spanish blood, covers an exceedingly broad field.

In noting the history of woman in South America, it is pleasant to relate that one of the first of the sex of whom we have record is chronicled as having performed a vast

service to posterity, even though it were one which would have been done by others had she not been the pioneer. It is recorded that the first wheat ever sown in South America was carried to Lima, in the year 1535, by Doña Maria de Escobar, though the quantity was only a few grains. When the crop came to ripeness, the lady called together all her friends to celebrate the first harvest of wheat ever gathered in the New World; and although she was in error as to this,—wheat having been produced in Mexico in 1528 by a negro slave belonging to Cortés, who accidentally found a few grains mingled with the rice supplied to the soldiers and sowed them,—she is none the less deserving of being held in honorable remembrance as the benefactor of generations yet to come. While speaking of benefactors among South American women, one may be mentioned who is remarkable both for her race and for the form of one of her bequests. This was Catalina Huanca, an Indian, who was so rich—being a cacique—that she left at her death much money to be expended in various charitable bequests, among them being the still existing hospital of Santa Ana at Lima; but the extraordinary bequest to which allusion is made was a sum to be used for forming and maintaining a body guard for the viceroy, the guard to comprise both infantry—halberdiers, as the foot then were in such a body—and cavalry, and to consist of a hundred men. It is difficult to say whether this bequest was not a malicious hit at the poverty of show among the high Spanish officials as compared with the state held by the Indians in their ceremonials; but the viceroy did not care to inquire too curiously into the donor's meaning, but preferred to accept with gratitude the goods with which the gods had provided him.

It may be broadly said that the characteristics of the Spanish-American ladies of Chili, Peru, and the rest of

the greater Spanish-American states were from the first, and continue until now, very like those of the Mexican women. Even physically there is a great resemblance in the races, as indeed there should be, considering the identity of parent stock. Their complexions were and are rarely good; but their hair and eyes are generally fine and their figures excellent, while small feet form a national physical trait of which they, like their Mexican sisters, are exceedingly proud. There has never been any marked racial individuality among the women of South America, and what little there once was has entirely disappeared. Even early in the past century a traveller, in noting the influx of European manners, said: "This spirit of imitation is natural and praiseworthy, but it produces a cloying sameness; it is a leveller, destructive alike of national and personal individuality, and the traveller, tired of seeing continually reproduced the manners, customs, dress, and even ideas with which he has always been familiar, will tarry with pleasure in those spots presenting the freshness of originality. Such spots exist only where a continual jostling with the exterior world has not abraded the salient angles of the national character."

It may be added that such spots have become increasingly difficult to find, and that the romance of South America has entirely disappeared before the march of "progress." Yet few countries have known more of romance, and this in regard to her women, though the chronicle is scanty and must be pieced together from scraps of information. Perhaps the most romantic era of South American women was that of the buccaneers. It was a brief time and one that held much of peril to womanly honor and virtue; but it also held delightful possibilities for the daughters of Spain in their new home. These ladies, even some of noble birth, looked not unkindly upon the "hereticos"

who came with fire and sword to gain wealth in the shape of booty and ransom. Do we not read in quaint old chronicle of that paladin of a filibuster, Revenau de Lussan, who, in 1685, put Panama to ransom and then occupied the town of Queaquilla? De Lussan was a freebooter, which is a polite way of writing "pirate," and he was a Frenchman in days when Gallic morals were not on the highest of planes even when judged by the usual standard of their country; but the gentlemanly filibuster was frankly shocked at the state of affairs existing in Queaquilla, where he found the most beautiful and wanton women he had ever encountered. The monks and priests with which the town swarmed took the lead in illicit intercourse with the entirely willing ladies, and there were few children who had the faintest idea concerning the identity of their paternal parents. The people of this place had been told frightful stories about the pirates, and when De Lussan captured a pretty young woman, the maid to the wife of the governor, she begged him with tear-strewn cheeks, *Señor, por l'amor de Dios no mi coma!* [Senor, for the love of God do not eat me!] It took but a short time, however, for the jovial buccaneers to prove to the ladies that they were not greatly to be feared by the fair sex unless the latter proved unkind; and when the pirates retired to the island of Puna with their spoils they were accompanied by many of the ladies of Queaquilla, who went with them nominally as prisoners awaiting ransom but really as willing mistresses. There the freebooters spent many glorious weeks in high revelry, with music, wine, dancing, and all other amusements most dear to the pirate heart, the Spanish ladies entering most heartily into the spirit of the occasion. In the attack on the town De Lussan killed the Spanish treasurer, and the latter's disconsolate widow fell to the lot of the slayer of her husband. In a

few days she developed for the gallant Frenchman a passion that was absolutely embarrassing, insisting that he should remain with her after the rest of the band had departed, should marry her, and should live with her at Queaquilla. She actually went so far as to obtain from the governor a signed pardon for De Lussan for offences committed against Spanish possessions, so that he could be assured that he might safely remain. De Lussan, however, though he tells us that he "was not a little perplexed herewith," could not resolve to settle down and abandon the career of a pirate for that of a private citizen; he may also have had doubts as to the intention of the governor of keeping his fair promises when once he had the famous freebooter in his power; so he further tells us: "Thus I rejected her proposals, but so as to assure her I should retain even long as I lived a lively remembrance of her affections and good inclinations toward me." Thus he extricated himself from his quandary with all the finesse and gallantry of his nation and went his way rejoicing in his liberty. We are not told of the future fate of the lady, of whose name we are indeed kept in ignorance, but it is probable that some Spaniard consoled her for the loss of her lover as readily as had that lover for the loss of her husband.

De Lussan's experience with the women of Central America—which for convenience is here considered as part of the southern continent—was so typical that it has been treated at greater length than it may have deserved. Indeed, there seems to be much light thrown on the impetuous, passionate nature of the Spanish-American woman by her bearing toward the pirates who ravaged the shores of her country yet to whom she frequently gave her heart and virtue. Of course this bearing was not invariable; Morgan, a greater pirate, but not so gallant a gentleman as De Lussan, when he captured Panama

against fearful odds, found within its walls a Spanish lady with whom he fell violently in love, but who resolutely refused to listen to his proposals. Finding flattery, pleading, and bribery in vain, he showed the true brutality of his nature by throwing her into a foul dungeon and keeping her there half-starved, until even his rough comrades who delighted in slaughter and made the name of England a stench in the nostrils of the civilized world by their treatment of the Spaniards, remonstrated, and the brutal buccaneer was compelled by motives of policy to release his captive from her cell. She was finally ransomed and allowed to return to the ruins of her home, and here we lose sight of her; but we can remember her as one who was worthy of the best traditions of the Spanish ladies and whose memory may redeem the repute of her lighter countrywomen from their shame.

It must not be thought from what has been said as to the morality of Spanish-American women in certain periods and places that it is designed to charge the race in general with immorality. That were to utter a slander which would be as baseless as it would be inexcusable. It is unfortunately true that in the history of any country or race it is the women most famous for immorality and wickedness who stand out most prominently; those who were merely good were tolerably sure to be forgotten as unnoteworthy. So it was with South America. We have the word of a keen observer "that any impartial person who shall reside long enough among South Americans to become acquainted with their domestic manners will declare that conjugal and paternal affection, filial piety, beneficence, generosity, good nature, and hospitality are the inmates of almost every house. I have no doubt, too, that these virtues will continue here, until civilization and refinement shall drive them from their abode in the New

World, to make room for etiquette, formality, becoming pride, prudery, and hypocrisy from the Old. Then, the children of the first families in Lima (whom I have often seen rise from the table and carry a plateful of food to a poor protégé beggar, seated in the patio or under the corridor, wait and chat with the little wretch until he had finished, and return to the table) will look on such objects with disdain, because mamma has subscribed a competent sum to a charitable institution and made that sum known to the world through the medium of the newspapers! I cannot avoid fearing that this modern improvement will supersede their own pure but almost antiquated customs."

This, written about 1825, is a severe arraignment of the blessings of our civilization; but it is also a sincere compliment to the character of South American women and so is worth quoting. Fond of pleasures the South American señorita and even señora has always been; but such fondness, however indicative of volatility of temperament and lack of depth of nature, is not incompatible with many of the virtues which are held in high esteem among women. Another thing worthy of note in the words of our sarcastic critic is the reference to the disappearance, even at that date, of the more characteristic customs of South American ladies. A later visitor to Chile and Peru tells us that the young señoritas often denied that they practised smoking, whereas we know from other travellers that but a short time prior to that period it was considered the height of courtesy for the South American lady to transfer to the lips of her male companion the cigarette moist from her own. Eating sweetmeats from the same plate was also common at one time, in fact, down to the beginning of the last century, among South American ladies and gentlemen; they even sucked *maté,* the native tea, from a single tube.

These characteristic customs have long since passed away, and now the Spanish-American lady sedulously apes her European contemporaries in tastes, dress, and customs. She has retained but little of the individuality which once marked her national place among her sex; yet in one respect she is still unique, and it is to be hoped will long remain so. That singularity is her influence and part in politics.

All of us know the constant political cataclysms that occur in South America. It is said that a Spanish-American lady who not long ago visited New York looked with some surprise upon the arrogance of one of the *grandes dames* of the city and inquired the reason. "Why, my dear," replied her interlocutor, "she is a Daughter of the Revolution!" "Oh, *ça!*" replied the charming South American, with a shrug: "Is that all? For me, I am the daughter of at least six!" The anecdote may be apocryphal, but it is none the less pointed; and the constant revolutions of the South American states have become fair matter for jest. In these turbulent ebullitions of racial spirit rather than national liberty the fair señoritas and señoras have had a most prominent part. Not only have they incited and encouraged the men who bore the brunt of the actual combat, but, if those who know most of the inner histories of these affairs of state are to be believed, the women have been the most efficient as well as the most ardent plotters. In fact, it may be said that of late years, say for the latter half of the past century, politics has become with South American women as much a fashion as literature was in France at the time of the great *salons*. She who had never plotted was at one time—not yet entirely passed away—beyond the social pale, while she who was fortunate enough to include among the visitors to her political *salon* some especially virulent revolutionist

was regarded with as much envy as, in circles of other nationality, is the exhibitor of some literary lion of particularly loud roar. We often hear the expression, "the game of politics"; but certainly it has never been so well applied as to the somewhat dangerous but entirely conventional pursuits of the female plotters and revolutionists of South America. That these women, of whom none has bequeathed to posterity a name worthy of record, have been of some influence in regulating the course of South American events it is impossible to deny; but their methods have not, as a rule, been such as to call forth high eulogium of feminine politics. They have been for the most part on a plane with the female Nihilists of Russia, save that the latter are in deadly earnest, while the South American ladies play at politics as their northern sisters at golf, with intent to win indeed, but after all merely as a diversion.

This aspect of the woman of South America, however, is the only one of characteristic form she has retained after her determined subduing of national individuality to European commonplaceness. The lady of Brazil, Peru, Chili, or the lesser South American states is not characteristic in appearance, in custom, or in thought; she stands simply as a modification of Latin civilization under variant conditions, and is hardly to be distinguished from her European sisters of similar stock. There is of course some individuality left among the lower class of women; but even this is fast disappearing before the inroads of the more insistent culture. As with the Mexican, so with the South American woman: she has ceased to possess racial uniqueness and so has ceased to be nationally interesting, however she may charm as an individual.

It is therefore rather in the individual than in the typical aspect that there may be presented to the notice of the reader the names of some of the more noted women

of South American culture in later years. While it is true that during the last half of the nineteenth century, particularly in Chile and the Argentine Republic, the feminine status underwent a marked change, coming into closer touch with the standards of civilization in the more advanced civilizations, the woman of prominence, in anything save politics, is still the notable exception in South America. The most marked advance in this respect is to be found in Chile, where, in 1879, the University and its colleges were, by special statute, opened to women students, and where, in 1900, the Medical School contained thirty-eight women, not a few of whom were taking post-graduate courses after having passed through the regular curriculum. The government of Chile actually sent as a special student to Austria and Germany a woman, Ernestina Pérez, who has since taken high rank as a physician.

The advance in the status of women in Chile was doubtless largely due to the influence of Mercédes Marin del Solar, whose writings first extorted from Spanish masculinity a reluctant confession that a woman might achieve deserved fame in paths hitherto thought to be sacred to the feet of men. Born in 1804, when among her countrymen women were considered mere child-bearers, she devoted her life to proving that her sex possessed the qualities requisite for high attainment in literary matters as well as in the graver concerns of life; and she won ample success. Even with the scant opportunities for obtaining an education which were then stingily meted out to women, Señora Solar managed to develop her natural culture; and while still a young woman she became an ardent public advocate for the higher education of her sex. She did not live to see her efforts crowned with full fruition; but they were effectual at last. It is,

however, chiefly for her literary accomplishments that she will live in memory; her ode on the death of Don Diego Portales remains a standard, and her *Ode to Washington*, inspired by the interest taken by its author in the American Civil War, which was then raging, shows breadth of thought and fine philosophical powers, while it is of especial interest to us because of its subject and aim.

Señora Solar was of the earlier age of Chilean feminine culture and was greatly hampered by the conditions existing in her period of largest activities; but a later writer, Rosario Orrego de Uribe, has carried on the work so admirably begun and has added to its range and effect. For years Señora Orrego de Uribe was at the head of a large journal, the *Revista de Valparaiso*, and thus found a suitable medium for the expression of her theories. Moreover, as a novelist she has attained high rank, and she has written poetry which is above the average. Her influence has been steadily for the emancipation and advancement of her sex, and her work is not yet finished, though she has seen the cause she embraced with such enthusiasm prosper even beyond the highest hopes of its first advocates.

Among the notable women of Chile may also be mentioned the name of Juana Ross de Edwards. As the name implies, she is of Anglo-Saxon descent and has strengthened the blood by marriage. She is noted as a philanthropist, giving largely and wisely to worthy objects, and she is so admittedly a power in the land that she was one of the first to suffer banishment when Balmaceda came into power in 1891. The powerful dictator feared the influence of Señora Edwards more than the plots of the most virulent of his masculine foes.

The Argentine Republic has also some great names to boast among its women. Juana Manso de Noronha was

a potent influence in the cause of education. She early came under the influence of Sarmiento, the greatest of South American educators, and she was actually appointed by the government of Argentina to edit the *Annales de la Educaciòn Comun*, a paper in the interests of public education, founded by Sarmiento himself. Both in theory and practice, for she conducted a large school at one time, she proved herself a woman of profound thought and eager energy in the subjects to which she devoted her life, and Argentina owes her no small debt for its advance in culture. Her work, since her death in 1890, has been to some extent carried on by Eduarda Mansilla de Garcia, though Señora Garcia is known rather as a writer than an educator. Her novels have won deservedly high repute and one of them found tribute from so absolute an authority as Victor Hugo. Another great influence in the cause of feminine culture was Juana M. Gorriti, an Argentine; but her activities were mainly exerted in Peru. This latter country has hardly kept apace of her South American sisters in the cause of feminine emancipation and culture; yet even Peru has some names of which she may boast, as those of Mercédes Cabello Cabonero, a writer on philosophical and social questions, and Clorinda Matto de Turner, a novelist whose work is rather of the ultra-realistic school. Both women are enthusiastic and influential, nor do they stand entirely alone in the circles of Lima. Yet in that old city the advance in the matter of feminine culture has been very slow; the doors of the University of San Marcos, in Lima, are still shut to women students, and there are no signs that there will soon be encouragement to women to take their modern place among men in the old land of the Incas.

What has been stated of South American women applies in general to the women of Brazil; nevertheless this

country furnishes historic incidents that claim place in an account of the women of South America. Searching the early chronicles we find a few records of Indian women who have gained prominence, and whose descendants have taken high rank in their country. We learn of the romantic marriage of the daughter of the chief Teberyca to the Portuguese adventurer João Ramalho, in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, from which union sprang the "Mamelucos," the sturdy independent people who brought about the colonization of the State of San Paulo. But a still more interesting record is the story of a Brazilian "Pocahontas," which if not acceptable in its entirety, at least enjoys the credit of a deep-rooted tradition. It is told that Diogo Alvares Corrêa was shipwrecked near Bahia in 1510, and, falling into the hands of the Tupinambá Indians, was doomed to furnish a cannibal feast. At the moment when his life was about to be taken, Paraguassú, the daughter of the chief, interposed and secured the victim's release. However much is fiction, however much is truth in this part of the story, it is certain that Diogo married the Indian maiden and that she became the mother of children whose descendants hold influential rank in Brazil to this day. Paraguassú was moreover an enlightened woman and a benefactress, and is greatly honored by Brazilians. In the Chapel of Graça, in the Cathedral at Bahia, the following epitaph perpetuates her memory: "Tomb of Dona Catharina Alvares Paraguassú, Lady that was of the Capitania of Bahia, which she and her husband Diogo Alvares Corrêa gave to the King of Portugal, having built this chapel of Nossa Senhora da Graça, which she gave, with the ground annexed, to the Patriarch São Bento, in the year 1582." To the influence of Paraguassú is to be attributed much of the power gained by her husband over the Indians, which enabled him to promote the early

colonization of Bahia. Paraguassú may therefore be regarded as one of the great pioneers in the civilization of South America.

In any account of the women of Brazil the story of the Amazons should find place. The early explorers of the Amazon country have generally accepted, or at any rate given prominence to, the Indian narrative of these female-warriors. They are said to have formed a powerful body and to have ruled over a large territory and proved invincible in battle. In appearance tall, robust, and fair they wore their long hair twisted about their heads; their costume was simply a dress of animal skin which they tucked about their loins; their weapons were bows and arrows. Humboldt relates the Indian account that these warrior women once a year admitted to their company for a limited time the men of the neighboring tribe, who at the expiration of their period of leave were sent away with presents. All the male children born to these women were killed in infancy, the female children being brought up by their mothers. The origin of this tribe of female-warriors is clouded with mystery. One explanation is that they abandoned the men of their tribe and sought to establish a settlement in the region of the Jamundá River, but being followed by their disconsolate husbands and despairing lovers, pity caused them to relent to the extent of making a pact with the discarded ones to admit them to their society on sufferance once a year. We have no sufficient data concerning the organization of government of the tribe or other information which would admit of treating this subject otherwise than as a curious historic phase of Brazilian womanhood.

Through the periods of settlement and the Portuguese rule we pass without notice of any woman of such prominence as to secure noteworthy mention, yet woman's

influence must have been exerted and felt along each step of the path toward independence; they buttressed with their ambition and patriotism the enlarging spirit of nationality. So in the crisis that followed the declaration of independence in 1822, we need not be surprised to find a woman mentioned for heroism and patriotism. A Bahian girl, Maria de Jesus Medeiros, touched by her father's lament that he had no son to fight in his country's cause, and fired to action, disguised herself as a soldier and fought through the war. Her signal service, however, was on the occasion of the attempted landing of a powerful force of Lusitanians at the mouth of the Paraguassú River. Here Maria stood to resist the invader; at the head of a troop of Bahian Amazons she charged the oncoming soldiers, and, in spite of superior numbers, discipline and equipment, her valor and that of her companions prevailed and the discomfited Portuguese were driven back ingloriously.

In the absence of more specific information we may, moreover, gather that woman's influence was of notable moment in Brazil at the period of the independence, for we find that in 1821, Viscount de Pedra Branca, a deputy from Bahia to the Cortes at Lisbon, a prominent leader of the Liberals and a man of world-wide fame, advocated that political liberty should be granted to Portuguese women, and the fact that the Cortes ignored his plea does not lessen the force of the presumption that woman in Brazil had acquired pronounced influence in politics at this time.

Among the women of the period of the empire the Crown Princess Isabel stands most prominent, and exception will hardly be taken to her inclusion in an account of Brazilian women. On her shoulders, as regent, devolved the government at intervals for many years. Remarkable

for firmness of character, she was moreover imbued with lofty principles. The conspicuous act of her regency was the emancipation of the slaves, the decree for which she signed on July 10, 1888. In this act her courage and devotion were put to the severest test, yet realizing fully that her signing the decree would perhaps involve the overthrow of the empire and certainly lose her much popularity, or, at any rate, much influential support, she did not falter; nor did she content herself with a mere concurrence in the legislative course, but issued a declaration in which she exalted the act and glorified the emancipation. Her strength of character and her fidelity to her trust rose above all personal or party considerations. Soon followed, in fact, the quiet revolution of a few hours and the empire had vanished; a great republic was installed, and in this crisis Isabel again stood dignified and lofty, in her farewell manifesto to the Brazilian people proving her patriotism and voicing her womanly sentiment and unfeigned sorrow.

The political, social, and economic changes effected by emancipation in Brazil were not attended with violent disturbance as was the case in the United States. Generally, the act was favorably received, although great hardship was caused to many individual slaveowners. So far as this measure has affected Brazilian women, the result may safely be assumed as making for their uplifting. Woman has been stimulated to greater activity, intellectual, domestic, and social.

Of the emancipated race it can hardly be doubted that they are in better state. In the large cities where the negroes constitute a large proportion of the population, as in Bahia, their condition betokens relative material prosperity and physical content. A most characteristic picture is presented on a holiday by a Bahian negress, when the

occasion permits of the racial indulgence of lavish display. Her deckings are dazzling in color and bewildering in variety,—dress ornaments and air of self-satisfaction offer a moving picture that cannot well be forgotten. In the many industries of Brazil where manual labor still holds relatively great preponderance over mechanical, the negroes furnish a very considerable part of the labor, as also in the work of the great *haciendas*. What may almost be termed a general industry is the preparation of manioc or mandioca, the cultivation of which was considered of such importance in colonial days as to be obligatory. It is an article of almost universal use in Brazil, and the free negroes of to-day are no less skilful in cultivating and preparing it than were their forbears in slavery days.

Since the inauguration of the republic of Brazil there are but few women of whom notable mention has been made. It has been a period of transition and adjustment in which woman's activities, though constantly exercised in patriotic endeavor and toward social progress, have not found the record that they merit. Nevertheless, we get a glimpse of the character of the later womanhood of Brazil in the words of Senhora Campos-Salles,—the wife of a recent president,—addressed to her husband on the occasion of a political revolution in the State of San Paulo: "You must forget to-day that you have a wife and children and remember only your duty to your country."

The social and domestic life of woman in Brazil is still largely influenced by European customs. The senhorita's chaperon is still regarded as a conventional desideratum, and courtship, if not quite as much a "long distance" communication as among the Puritans of New England when the "courting-stick" was in vogue, is yet largely regulated according to the customs of the mother country, and generally involves the presence of the family. As in the

political, so in the social world, however, the spirit of the New World has entered and the Brazilian woman is very gradually throwing off restraints which European convention has put upon her, and is participating more generally and prominently in intellectual, social, and political affairs. In social progress and amelioration, in educational and charitable activities she is taking place as an accepted leader. In the elementary schools for girls the instruction is entrusted exclusively to women, who, on the other hand, are also found in charge of those for boys. There are special institutions provided for the education of girls in "all womanly arts," and in addition to this the State provides them with a dot for the purchase of a wedding trousseau and a suitable housekeeping equipment.

In art and literature the names of Brazilian women have gained honor,—among painters, Senhoras de Andrade and Bertha Worms,—and among writers, Senhoras de Bivar, de Almeida, and de Azeredo. Senhora de Almeida has established and edited a paper devoted to the *feministe* movement in Brazil.

While the list of notable and noted South American women is far from exhausted by these names, enough has been said to show that below the equator as well as above it there has been advance and change. Yet it must be confessed that in South America the march of feminine progress has thus far been very slow and is still confined, as already said, to individuals rather than manifested in national or racial movement. It may yet broaden into this; but the omens are hardly propitious. The restraining and clogging influence is rather of racial than masculine nature; it is less that the men look upon the advanced woman as a *lusus naturæ*, though this also is broadly true, than that the women are not racially capable of working out their own salvation in this line. Thus far the

movement has been almost entirely productive of leaders only; there is no rank and file to give it strength and continuity. There is ardent enthusiasm; but it is confined within narrow limits. Yet he would be a rash prophet who should foretell that these circumstances will continue to prevail, and it may well be that the signs may develop into conditions and South America prove a close follower, if not a pioneer, in the march of feminine advancement and culture.

Chapter IV

The Period of Settlement

IV

THE PERIOD OF SETTLEMENT

WE have now reached the point in our consideration of the women of our own land where we are free to turn to the story of the American woman as she is generally known—the woman of the United States. Of course scientific ethnology recognizes no such nomenclature, giving the title of "American" only to the aborigines of this continent; but we who write and read this work are not concerned to be scientific but rather perspicacious on the one side and perspicuous on the other, and the generally accepted nomenclature will be adopted here and the woman of the United States and the mother-colonies spoken of as being, by right as well as acceptation, the American woman to all other lands and ages.

Before entering upon the history of the woman of our country, it seems needful to cast a glance upon some general conditions which must be reckoned with in our estimate and appreciation of the women of America and their history. As a preliminary, the story of the Blue Fairy will be related,—a story so old that it may be new to most of the readers of this volume and which, fairy story though it be, has yet a meaning in the study of the history of women, if we will but seek it out. Here is the story, as told by Stahl:

"One day the Blue Fairy descended to earth with the courteous intention of distributing to all the young girls of

the different nations the treasures of beauty that she brought with her.

"Her dwarf Amaranth sounded his horn, and instantly a young girl of every nation presented herself at the foot of the Blue Fairy's throne. Then, after having made a short speech, she proceeded to distribute her gifts.

"She gave to the young girl who represented all the Castiles locks so black and long that she could make a mantilla of them.

"To the Italian she gave eyes as bright and burning as an eruption of Vesuvius in the middle of the night.

"To the Turkish girl, a figure as round as the moon and as soft as eider-down.

"To the English girl, an aurora borealis to tint her cheeks, her lips, and her shoulders.

"To the German, teeth like her own, and a tender heart.

"To the Russian, the dignity of a queen.

"Then, going into details, she put gayety on the lips of the Neapolitan—wit in the brain of the Irish girl—good sense in the heart of the Flemish girl; and, when nothing remained to be given, she arose to take her flight.

"'And I?' said the Parisian to her, detaining her by the floating border of her tunic.

"'I had forgotten you.'

"'Entirely forgotten, madam.'

"'I overlooked you. But what can I do? My bag of gifts is empty.'

"She reflected an instant, and then called around her the recipients of her gifts, told them the situation, and asked them to share their treasures with their unfortunate sister. Who could refuse a fairy, and above all the Blue Fairy? So, with the graciousness always conferred by happiness, these girls in turn approached the neglected Parisian and as they passed her one threw her a part of

her black hair, another a tint of her rosy complexion; this one a beam of her joyousness, that one a touch of her sensibility; and thus it came about that the Parisian, so poor, so obscure, so eclipsed by her sisters, found herself in an instant, by this generous division, richer and more attractively endowed than any of her companions."

Now this charming little parable is by courtesy true of the Parisienne; but it is far truer of the American woman, for of her it might have been written as a parable indeed. The product of no one blood, no isolated race, she has been given by the fusion of variant races in her ancestry an origin and a tradition, both physical and mental, such as has been granted to no other woman of whom history tells us. Into the ancestry of the English woman entered the elements of the Celtic blood, Brythonic and Goidal, of the Saxons and Teutons, of the later Normans and even Provençals, while through all, perhaps, ran the strain of the primitive Briton and Pict; but not even in this mingling of races can she compare with her American sister in diversity of racial source. Moreover, the English stock, which we unite in calling—incorrectly—the Anglo-Saxon, has remained permanent in type and fount; but this is not so with the American. This latter is in constant process of modification by the introduction of new progenital elements, and it cannot now be prophesied when there will be a clearly-defined race, with individual and permanent characteristics, established upon this side of the great seas.

Therefore the American woman is the heir of the ages in a sense never before true of anyone. As with the Parisian in the story, so with the American woman in truth, all races have united in bringing her of their best gifts. It is for her to make of these the best that she may; certainly none of her sisters has ever begun her career with such fortune brought her by destiny as a birth-gift.

It must not, however, be forgotten or unnoted that, while the American woman is thus rich in a heritage unequalled by that granted to any of her sisters, being world-heir instead of heir to a race, she has some corresponding disadvantages to overcome in her effort to influence as a racial representative the currents of world-thought and world-progress. She has behind her no national tradition stretching far back into a past so remote that it has ceased to be effect and has become merely foundation. The American woman, alone of all the representatives of the higher cultures, has no effective nationality to shape her trend. She is a product of her time only, not of time and ancient tradition mingled; she has no distinct nationality of growth and line of progress. Every other woman of Caucasian race has a past to which to refer as inspiration and cause, a past which is a story of upward growth, of ever-increasing culture. The American woman found her culture ready for her—was already, at her birth, the child and expression of the highest civilization known to her day. She had no need of exerting formative influence upon her race; all was already done to her hand. Thus she lacks the greatest of all traditions—the tradition of growth and development.

Yet, though not of native production, though lacking the influence of constant-trending nationality, the American woman is and always has been strongly individual. While she is not an indigenous development, not a result of racial growth and broadening, yet her development has been essentially characteristic. She has reached forward upon lines of variant trend from those of her sisters of other cultures, and she is truly a product of her country in that she has been shaped by the conditions of the time and circumstances of that country's birth. There was breathed into her from the first the informing spirit of the typical American civilization—the spirit of freedom. And into

her nature has also come another spirit distinctively American—the spirit of the wilderness subdued and conquered, of a barren land made to yield its treasures to the arm of the pioneer—the spirit of conquest. There is no new gift of mind or soul brought to her by other nations that has not been modified by these twin spirits. Thus, though heir to all nations and peoples, though product of all cultures, she remains typically American in dominant traits, in the path in which she has chosen to set her feet. Latin and Teuton, Slav and Celt, she has in her veins the blood of them all; but she is still less their result than their modification, and she is still the child of America even more than of the world which has given her life.

The conditions under which the northern continent of America was first settled were somewhat peculiar as contrasted with those of any other settlement whose full history we know. It was entirely different, for example, from the settlement of South America or Mexico. In both the latter cases there was what may be described as a blow and a victory; there was a conquest over a primitive, even if remarkably civilized people, and that was the end of the matter save for the mere formal colonization which followed. This was not the case with the colonization of North America. There was no overt or complete conquest; on the contrary, there was at first overture of peace between the inhabitants of the country and the newcomers. This did not last; the whole of the first history of the colonization of North America may be summed up, at least in its most prominent aspect, in one word—war. But this warfare was not decisive; it was not waged against a nation, but against nations, fighting individually and jealously of each other indeed,—else they must have prevailed at first,—but yet constantly bringing forward new disputants of the title of the newcomers to the land.

The country had to be won from its original owners step by step, not by one or many blows; the process of reclamation was by a steady pushing back of the aborigines, not by a conquest such as that of Norman over Saxon or even Englishman over Maori. There was no conquered race to become eventually amalgamated with its conquerors; the history of all the first period of settlement is the history of civilization driving barbarism before it as it marched on. But for such methods there was need of a somewhat peculiar and very strenuous civilization; the desired result was not to be won by any graces or abstractions, but by the prevailing of white stamina, bravery, and ingenuity over red cunning and tradition and honesty—of the axe over the tomahawk, of the rifle over the bow. It was the triumph of the knowledge rather than the principles belonging to a higher culture than that which was going down; it was Friar Bacon with his gunpowder, not Francis Bacon with his learning, who was fighting the battle of the white against the red, and was affecting the progress of the world.

In conditions arising from strife woman has but little place. She may indeed be present, and even be a part of the conditions which are inevitable in times of conquest; but she is there only as an accident, not as a requisite. The elimination of the influence of woman from the trend of present civilization would be fatal to all approach to any worthy goal; but in the time of the beginnings of our country's story woman was a hindrance rather than a help to progress, since by her presence and the consequent anxiety and by her weakness in physical prowess she enfeebled the fighting powers of the garrison or village. Even so, she had her part, and an honorable one, in the events which established white dominance in America; but it was one that was necessarily subordinate in the eyes of the chroniclers

of those times, and so we hear but little of women in the flush of our country's dawn. It is not to be questioned that in the first colonies planted by England in the New World there were women—perhaps nearly as many as men. We are apt to forget, by the way, that Virginia was originally settled by the Spaniards under Menendez, the perpetrator of the terrible massacre in Florida by which his name is best remembered, and that the Latin races, both Spanish and French, long anticipated the English in colonization of our country. It is quite certain that in all these early Latin colonies there were women and that these bore no inconsiderable part in the events which were trending, though sometimes by devious paths, to the establishment of Caucasian empire in America; but their names are unknown to us and we are even ignorant of their place in the history of their time. The story of southern settlement, as far as this has any effect upon the present, begins for us with the settlement of Roanoke Island by Sir Walter Raleigh's ill-fated colony. The tale of its mysterious disappearance is too well known to call for recapitulation here; but before that sudden and final ending of its story we have chronicles which tell us that among these pioneer pilgrims were women, mostly wives of the men settlers, who bore their part in the burden and heat of the day,—and those days were toilsome and full of peril,—as well as their more active lords. Also to that lost colony belongs the honor of having reared the first alien child born on American soil, the forerunner of the race that was to make that soil its own,—Virginia Dare, the little maiden whose passing was as mysterious as her coming was ominous. The first of the enormous army of the conquering palefaces who were to overrun the land like locusts, she passed away into the mysterious silence of the woods as the standard bearer of the advance,

leaving her name to be a shadowy record for all future ages and the very embodiment of the spirit of romance that was in the story of the subjugation of America. Had she lived the normal life of the woman pioneer, her memory would have lacked something of romance; but her unknown fate, and her position in the van of the great coming nation of Americans, keep her in remembrance.

Jamestown was founded on May 13, 1607, and with its foundation began the real era of English rule in America. We know but little of the place of woman in the first days of the colony, and it is not until 1608 that we find any record of female influence or even presence. At this time, Captain Newport, who had brought from England the first fleet and in whose honor Newport News—originally Newport Ness—was named, made his reappearance with a number of fresh settlers, among them being Mistress Forrest and her maid, Anne Burras by name, who was shortly afterward wedded to Master John Laydon and thus won for herself fame as the first woman of English blood to be married on American soil. By this time, Jamestown had grown to have a population of more than five hundred souls, of whom not more than two hundred were fighting men; so that the proportion of women and children must have been far larger than might be supposed by those looking at the circumstances of colonization and existence. It must have taken a stout heart in a woman's breast to face the unknown dangers of the unknown world; and soon the women of the infant colony had need for all their bravery. There is no doubt that the women played a noble part in the terrible days that followed the Indian siege of Jamestown—the days which were afterward known as the "Starving Time." Not more than sixty of the original five hundred souls remained at the end of that period; and its record presents the probably unique account of women

of the higher civilizations descending to the horrors of cannibalism, the "common kettel" at last containing the bodies of Indians and even of kinsmen. Indeed, there was one foul deed of that time wherein a woman was directly concerned, though as victim, not principal: a colonist killed his wife and had eaten part of the body before he was discovered. He was burned alive; but those who punished him for his crime looked fearfully forward to the day when their own temptations might become too strong. At last came succor; and there seems to be for us assurance of the temper and mettle of the women of that time when we find that of the sixty survivors a fair proportion was of the weaker sex. There were children also, witnesses to the devotion of their mothers in their care.

The colony was abandoned; but only for three days, and then began the time of uninterrupted English dominance. There is, however, in its history nothing of importance to our subject until we reach 1621,—very near the limit which has been set as the end of the "period of settlement." At this time there occurred an event so peculiar and so far-reaching in its social results and withal so intimately connected with the general, though not the particular, chronicle of woman in the early colonies that it may be set forth in some fulness, even though it was one that does not give us any instance of feminine development. But it was so typical of its time and so ominous of the mothers that moulded the characters of the native-born pioneers in the southern settlements that it has its legitimate place in a history of American women. That event is the coming of the "maids," as they were called in the old chronicle from which we draw most of our knowledge concerning the early settlers of Virginia.

Sir Edwin Sandys, being at the head of the London Company, in whose hands were now the interests of the

Virginia plantations, devised the plan of sending out as wives to the Virginia adventurers a number of respectable young women. It is probable that Sandys was instigated by the thought of the dangers of mixed marriages with the Indians, which were apt to result from the paucity of women of Caucasian race,—for many young men had of late been tempted to try their fortunes in the New World, and the proportion of women had failed among the settlers. Sandys was in every way a believer in vigorous immigration, and in one year he sent out one thousand two hundred and sixty-one new settlers; these he was desirous of attaching to the soil of their new country,—a thing that could be done only by aiding them there to establish a home. So he secured a cargo of young women, ninety in number, who were willing to go to a far land in search of husbands. Whether he had great difficulty in finding such women, or whether matrimony as a prospect, even though with an indeterminate partner, was so attractive to the average spinster of the day as to make her eager to embrace any opportunity which held certainty of result, cannot be known; but the "maids" went, though under somewhat peculiar and even, to modern eyes, degrading conditions. For the thrifty company was not minded that the prospective husbands should have their wives as free gifts; no, they must pay for them as for any other chattel, and the price fixed was one hundred and twenty pounds of tobacco each, the value of this amount of the weed being about eighty dollars at present values. One would think that, if the matter was to be one of barter, the company might have set a higher price upon a wife, even if only out of compliment to the sex; but doubtless the company knew the true value of the goods which it purveyed.

It must be admitted that the worshipful company, notwithstanding its parsimonious spirit in the matter of

vend, acted in good faith with both prospective husbands and present "maids." It had already made many regulations intended to promote matrimony by distinguishing in favor of married men; and in the selection and care of the feminine cargo exported it took the utmost precautions to ensure the purity of the women offered as wives. Moreover, the "maids" were carefully guarded from imposition or force. Orders were straitly given that "In case they cannot be presently married, we desire that they may be put with several householders that have wives until they can be supplied with husbands. . . . We desire that the marriage be free, according to nature, and we would not have these maids deceived and married to servants, but only such freemen and tenants as have means to maintain them . . . not enforcing them to marry against their wills." However, there was very little need for these precautions, since the men of the settlement flocked in crowds to the sale of the ladies, and the only difficulty was that there were more suitors than there were fair ones to make them happy. The scene presented must have been very much like that to be found at the old hiring fairs of England, and there does not seem to have been more embarrassment on the part of the "maids" while their charms were being appraised by their suitors than if they had been merely disposing of their services for a short time and in menial capacity. It is impossible to suppose that women who would seek matrimony under such circumstances were of a very refined type; but, on the other hand, they must have been possessed of bravery and independence beyond the common lot of women of whatever class. Later, sixty other "maids," "young, handsome, and chaste," according to the chronicle, were induced to come out to the colony under the same conditions, and

these and their predecessors were among the founders of the race which developed into the soldiers of the Revolution and of the yet more terrible struggle of later years.

Unfortunately, there were at this time introduced into the young colony two elements that were to affect it, one slightly and temporarily only, the other profoundly and for as long as there was in the South a distinctiveness of culture. These were the practice of sending criminals to Virginia and the introduction of slavery. To the first number of settlers sent over by Sandys, James I. added one hundred felons,—and this was by no means the last shipload of criminals to be exported to the Virginias. These criminals included both men and women, and their introduction among the colonists, though on the pretence of their being indented servants, was an evil which for long found results in the lower strata of the growing civilization. The women, generally of the lowest dregs of English life,—where not political convicts, who were of course of entirely different stamp,—were "hired" by the more dissolute of the unmarried male colonists, and became openly their mistresses; and thus there came into existence a social element which was to do important if insidious work in the undermining of the older morals of the settlement. Slavery, however, was of far more import, and affected all the future civilization. In August, 1619, twenty negroes were sold as slaves to some of the planters, the blacks having been brought by a Dutch ship. This was the rise of the African cloud, as yet no bigger than a man's hand, but in time to grow to most portentous dimensions, and to bear the whirlwind as its legitimate progeny. It may be questioned why note is made of the rise of slavery in a book devoted to the history of woman; but to those who will trouble to think the reason is evident. The woman is

always at once a formative cause and a product of her civilization; and the civilization of the South was built upon the institution of slavery. To comprehend the culture—even the nature—of the Southern lady we must keep constantly in mind the influence of the national institution, so that, as its effects will have to be frequently noted in the future, it is not amiss to chronicle here the small root which afterward spread to such upas growth.

Turning to matters more immediately of the time with which we are at present concerned, a proclamation of Governor Wyat, issued shortly before the fall of the Virginia Company and the consequent beginning of the real colonial period, is worthy of note as bearing upon the universal story of women. Though including men as well as women in its provisions, the proclamation was aimed chiefly at the latter, and its intent was the breaking up of the seemingly common habit of becoming engaged to more than one person at a time. A man was to be whipped for doing so vile an action, though a woman might escape with a fine. The worthy governor forbade women "to contract themselves to two several men at one time," for the reason that "women are yet scarce and in much request, and this offense has become very common, whereby great disquiet has arisen between parties and no small trouble to the government." It was further proclaimed that "Every minister should give notice in his church that what man or woman soever should use any word or speech tending to a contract of marriage to two several persons at one time . . . as might entangle or breed scruples in their consciences, should for such their offense either undergo corporal correction or be punished by fine or otherwise, according to the quality of the person so offending."

Such a regulation would not be popular nowadays; but coquetry seems to have been of more serious moment then. That flirtation should threaten the government itself suggests a singular state of affairs indeed.

It is now time to turn to a consideration of another settlement—the only one that rivalled that of Virginia in effectiveness of result and continuity. For the settlements in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and others—with one exception, to be reserved for later brief consideration—did not continue the civilization which they established, but took their later culture, that which survives, from the more prepotent colonies of Virginia and New England. Therefore they do not enter into our present inquiry, since they produced no feminine type or even individual of note; it is to the more northern and southern settlements that we must look for the foundations and matrices of American femininity. We have glanced at that of the South; let us glean what we may of the story of women in that of the North.

It was on November 11, 1620, that the Pilgrim Fathers, as they have come to be known to history, united in an agreement which was the foundation of constitutional government in America. They had been brought, rather as it seemed by Divine Providence than by their own guidance, to a more northern shore than that to which they had intended voyaging, and they had determined to make that place their colonial abode. Tradition records that the first to step on the famous Plymouth Rock was a woman, Mary Chilton by name, and the circumstance has brought her name down to us of this day. It would not seem a difficult manner of attaining immortality, that of stepping from a boat to a rock; most women, being gifted with the ordinary means of locomotion, could do as much; but circumstances decide the value of every action, and

so Mary Chilton achieved fame by one of the simplest and most natural acts of her whole existence. There are those who deny the very existence of Mary Chilton and sneer at the tradition that makes a woman lead the way to the florescence of American nationality; and it must be confessed that Mary Chilton, having taken the step which was to preserve her from forgetfulness, disappears as completely as if she had never lived. But we like to think the legend true, for it was most appropriate that a woman should head the march to that land where women were destined to be such a controlling force and where, as in no other country, women were to lead in many of the greatest movements that have crowned the civilization of our own day. One likes to believe in Mary Chilton; and it is something in favor of the story that the name of James Chilton is found attached to the document which has already been referred to and that it would be quite in keeping with Puritan superstition to send a young and pure maiden before them as their advance guard into the unknown land which was to be won by strength of soul as well as of arm.

At least we know that there were women, and those in due proportion, among the settlers. The total number of pilgrims has always been stated as small, and the *Mayflower*, their little vessel, is said to have been of but one hundred and eighty tons burden; but it is evident that there has been error in both these matters, judging by the large number of New Englanders whose ancestors "came over in the *Mayflower*." If half these genealogical tracings are founded on fact, the supposed tiny *Mayflower* must have been the forerunner of our present huge ocean liners; but, be this as it may, we have record that the first of these many descendants was born on the day following the arrival of the vessel. It was not a girl this time, as had

been the case with the first child born of English parents on Virginia soil; it was a boy, and he was appropriately named Peregrine, which signifies "pilgrim." While not directly germane to our subject—save so far as having been born of woman makes all men contributory to the history of women—it may be interesting to state that this first child of the Pilgrims lived to the age of eighty-three years, and died at Marshfield, where later died the greatest of New Englanders.

The influence of the women of the colonists was doubtless great in maintaining the courage and constancy of the men; but, as was the case with the early settlers in Virginia, we have little or no particular record of the feminine portion of the settlement. We are told of Priscilla, "the Puritan Maiden" in Longfellow's poem, *The Courtship of Miles Standish,* and we are entirely at liberty to account her a real personage if we desire to do so. It is at least certain that Miles Standish was the valiant captain pictured by the poet and that John Alden to whom the poet ascribes the office of deputy-wooer was one of the Pilgrim Fathers—whether the latter *in esse* or *in futuro* we are not told, though knowledge on this point might have bearing upon the authenticity of the story of Priscilla—and if the rest of the legend is not true it is at least well imagined. Moreover, it may be asserted that it *is* true in the deeper sense of truth, whether or not it be loyal to mere fact. The picture drawn for us of the Puritan maiden is typically true and therefore worthy of quotation even in a volume dedicated to the Muse of history rather than to her of poesy:

> "Ever of her he thought, when he read in his Bible on Sunday
> Praise of the virtuous woman, as she is described in the Proverbs—
> How the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her always,
> How all the days of her life she will do him good and not evil,

How she seeketh the wool and the flax and worketh with gladness,
How she layeth her hand to the spindle and holdeth the distaff,
How she is not afraid of the snow for herself or her household,
Knowing her household are clothed with the scarlet cloth of her weaving."

For they were no idle butterflies of fashion, no languid great dames, these wives and daughters of the Pilgrims. Their hands knew the rush of the thread on the wheel, the touch of the distaff, and were even not unacquainted at need with the weight of musket and bird-gun. They were cast to some extent in the fine old Spartan mould, these Pilgrim mothers; they feared God—and nothing else—and they bent their energies to the performance of their sole aspiration, that of "doing their duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call them." It was a state of life that held peril and toil and little reward for these things; but they cared nothing for this, these splendid pilgrim dames, but lived their lives bravely and died with the consciousness that they had done their best to make noble the birth of a new land which should shelter their children forever.

The first authentic record that we have of an individual woman in the time of the first northern settlement comes to us in the shape of a death, as the first feminine name of the Roanoke settlers came to us connected with a birth. It was in 1630, when the settlement of Massachusetts Bay had begun to take some aspect of permanency, that there came into its harbor a fleet of some ten or eleven ships, the flagship, a vessel of three hundred and fifty tons, being named the *Arabella*. She was thus called because of the presence on board of Lady Arabella Johnson, wife of a commoner called Isaac Johnson. The pair had come to America to breathe a purer atmosphere of freedom in religion than they had been able to find at home; but Lady Arabella was not destined long to enjoy the liberty she

sought. The words of Cotton Mather may be quoted in regard to her, the first of noble blood to succumb to the rigors of the new climate:

"Of those who soon dyed after their first arrival, not the least considerable was the lady Arabella, who left an earthly paradise in the family of an *Earldom,* to encounter the sorrows of a wilderness, for the entertainments of a *pure worship* in the house of God; and then immediately left that wilderness for the Heavenly paradise, whereto the compassionate Jesus, of whom she was a follower, called her. We have read concerning a noble woman of Bohemia, who forsook her friends, her plate, her house and all, and because the gates of the city were guarded, crept through the common sewer, that she might enjoy the institutions of our Lord at another place where they might be had. The spirit which acted that noble woman, we may suppose carried this blessed lady thus to and through the hardships of an American desart. But as for her virtuous husband, Isaac Johnson, Esq.,

"'He try'd
To live without her, lik'd it not, and dy'ed.'

"His mourning for the death of his honourable consort was too bitter to be extended a year; about a month after *her* death *his* ensued, unto the extreme loss of the whole plantation."

There is here much cause for smiling, especially in old Dr. Mather's unconscious snobbery as to the "paradise of an earldom," even to italicising the important word, and to his wonder how anyone could leave such delights for the goal of a "desart"; but there is also some moving if equally unconscious pathos, and for this, as well as for the fact of Lady Arabella's being the first feminine name to come down to us from Plymouth in the dignity of

history, her virtues and fate are here recorded. Moreover, that otherwise unfamed lady from Bohemia who left her "plate" behind her in her search for religious liberty deserves to be rescued from oblivion.

In the same vessel that brought Lady Arabella to the inhospitable shores of America there came another woman whose name better deserves memorial, as far as is concerned lasting influence of life, than does that of the saintly lady commemorated by Cotton Mather. Anne Dudley was the daughter of an old servitor of the Count of Lincoln, the father of Lady Arabella, and was herself married to Simon Bradstreet, destined to be governor of Massachusetts. She was as devout and devoted as Lady Arabella herself, and she was of yet finer stamp in that she was a poet. She was a Puritan of the Puritans; her father was later elected to be governor of the colony, preceding his son-in-law in that distinguished position, so that Anne Bradstreet must have been from the beginning of her life permeated with the very spirit of Puritanism. One would not think that such training and environment would be favorable to the fostering of the poetic faculty; severity of creed and the æsthetic soul do not often go hand in hand. Yet she was the first professional poet of New England,—indeed, probably of America; and, if fault be found for calling her a poet of America when she was not a native product, answer may be made that the New Englanders strenuously claimed her as their own under the title of the Tenth Muse, and that she was, if not a product of the soil of Massachusetts, at least a product of the spirit that made that soil sacred. She was very young, not yet twenty, when she arrived at Plymouth, and most of her poems were written during the first decade of her residence in the colony. Since, in this portion of our history there are few feminine names upon which to

expatiate, it may not be a waste of space to give in full the title page of the first volume of poems issued by the "American Sappho":

"THE TENTH MUSE—Lately sprung up in America; or Severall Poems, compiled with great variety of Wit and Learning, full of delight. Wherein especially is contained a complete discourse and description of

THE FOUR { ELEMENTS. / CONSTITUTIONS. / AGES OF MAN. / SEASONS OF THE YEAR.

Together with an Exact Epitomie of the Four Monarchies, *viz:*

THE { ASSYRIAN. / PERSIAN. / GRECIAN. / ROMAN.

Also a Dialogue between Old England and New, concerning the late troubles, With divers other pleasant and serious Poems. By a Gentlewoman in those parts. Printed at London for Stephen Bowtell at the Signe of the Bible in Popes Head Alley. 1650."

It will be noticed that the gifted poet was forced to have recourse to her native land to produce her works, and it may be—for the repute of her modesty, it is to be hoped that it was—that she never saw the title page until it had been printed. However, it would seem that there were many of her time who believed that she had some just

cause to claim the title which had been given her. One of her admirers wrote in more or less admirable verse a long compliment to her which contained the notable—though undeniably plagiarized—line:

"None but her self must dare commend her parts."

Apart from its too close resemblance to

"None but himself could be his parallel,"

it strikes one that Mrs. Bradstreet's admirer pays a poor compliment to the lady's modesty, however he may praise her ability; and another and abler critic, the Rev. Nathaniel Ward, takes occasion in paying his respects to the singer to cast a slur upon her sex:

"It half revives my chill frost-bitten blood
To see a Woman once do aught that's good;"

which could hardly be described as fulsome praise. It must be remembered that in those days it was rare to see a woman attempt anything with the pen, and the prologue to the volume contains some deprecatory reference to this state of affairs:

"I am obnoxious to each carping tongue
Who says my hand a needle better fits,
A Poet's pen all scorn I thus should wrong,
For such despite they cast on Female wits;
If what I do prove well, it won't advance,
They'll say it's stoln, or else it was by chance."

This strikes the judicious reader as better sarcasm than poetry; and, indeed, when one looks through the volume it is difficult to understand the enthusiasm roused by the production. It is a very ambitious affair; the Elements, as promised by the title page, have a great deal to say, and most of it is said in the right 'Ercles vein. Here,

for example, is the manner in which Fire ends her little speech:

> "What shall I say of Lightning and of Thunder
> Which kings and mighty ones amaze with wonder,
> Which make a Cæsar (Romes) the worlds proud head,
> Foolish Caligula creep under 's bed.
> And in a word, the world I shall consume
> And all therein at that great day of Doom."

This is not impressive; and we may gladly skip the rest of the remarks made by the Elements. The second quaternion of poems, as shown by the title page, is concerned with the four Ages of man, wherein the first Age exclaims:

> "What gripes of wind mine infancy did pain
> What tortures I in breeding teeth sustain!"

which is very excellent realism, but not highly poetical, either in sentiment or expression. The Seasons have but little more claim to a hearing than the Elements, and in the poem on the *Four Monarchies,* which is merely a rhymed version of Raleigh's *History of the World,* the only notable lines are those containing Mrs. Bradstreet's defence of her sex:

> "Now say, have Women worth? or have they none?
> Or had they some, but with our Queen is't gone?
> Nay Masculines, you have thus taxed us long;
> But she, though dead, will vindicate our wrong.
> Let such as say our Sex is void of Reason,
> Know 'tis Slander now but once was Treason."

The queen to whom these lines refer is of course Elizabeth; and we can well believe that in her day so to asperse the sex as to decline to admit their possession of the attribute of reason may well have been treason—sufficient, if reported to the highest quarter, to be punished by the terrible *peine forte et dure.* Although we may entirely sympathize with Mrs. Bradstreet's vigorous defence of her

sex from the foul slanders of the "Masculines," it is difficult to see wherein she makes good her claim to be considered the Tenth Muse, or the Hundred and Tenth, if so many could be named. Nevertheless, at her death sermons laudatory of her life and work were preached in nearly every church in New England, and her afflicted family must have been greatly comforted by the number and expressions of the elegies with which they were fairly deluged. Here is a specimen from the pen of the Rev. John Norton:

"A Funeral Elogy, upon that Pattern and Patron of Virtue, the truly pious, peerless and matchless Gentlewoman

MRS. ANNE BRADSTREET, RIGHT PANARETES,

Mirror of her Age, Glory of her Sex, whose Heaven-born-Soul leaving its earthly Shrine, chose its native home, and was taken to its Rest, upon the 16th Sept. 1672."

All of which strikes us as a little hyperbolic, while the phrase "Patron of Virtue" does not appear as very happily chosen, and the reference of the reverend gentleman in the body of his "poem" to the

"Black, fatal, dismal, inauspicious day"

would be a little overdone if applied to a general catastrophe. Yet even this balderdash is of interest as showing us the estimate in which was held America's first woman of letters—the first at least to attain note and thus worthy, in that respect at least, to be held as patron saint by all the lady writers of our day and country.

There were a few other women writers during the period of settlement; but they were very few. As may be gathered from the tenor of the quoted lines from Anne Bradstreet's prologue, the spirit of Puritanism was opposed to literary pursuits by a woman, at least to the degree of

a profession. Indeed, it is probable that there was widespread sympathy with the sentiments of the chronicler of the following incident, in which is to be seen the regard in which were held feminine *litterati:*

"The Governor of Hartford upon Connecticut came to Boston, and brought his wife with him (a godly young woman and of special parts) who was fallen into a sad infirmity, the loss of her understanding and reason, which had been growing upon her divers years by occasion of her giving herself wholly to reading and writing, and had written many books. Her husband being very loving and tender of her was loath to grieve her; but he saw his error when it was too late. For if she had attended to her household affairs, and such things as belong to women, and not gone out of her way and calling to meddle in such things as are proper for men, whose minds are stronger, she had kept her wits and might have improved them usefully and honorably in the place God had set her."

It was Governor Winthrop whose domestic affliction arose from such a strange cause; and it is not unlikely that he inspired the words here set down. At all events, the comments are amusing. If all the women now writing books were to suffer like penalty with Mistress Winthrop the insane asylums would have to be considerably enlarged; but authorship seems to have grown less fatal to the fair sex of late years.

For the rest, we must regard these mothers of the country in the mass rather than as individuals; and this is in accord with their true natures. They were not given to "brawling in the streets" or to "contention upon the housetops," these women of the old Puritans; they did their duties in their household and left the management of the weightier affairs of the young colony to the men. Yet they guided these same men in ways which they

hardly knew; and they were in all ways fitted to be the mothers of the nation which was even then beginning to stretch its infant arms in growing strength. They were grave, decorous, and terribly strong, those wives and daughters of the Pilgrims. They took upon themselves the cares of the household, and these were not slight in those days when all provision must be garnered by the sweat of the eater's brow. There were then no shops to which one might send in search of luxuries or even necessities; the Puritan woman usually brought with her on her ship some store of household goods, some chests of clothing, some plate perhaps to furnish forth her table; for all the rest she depended upon the energy and skill of her husband, the work of her own hands, and the blessing of that God to worship whom in freedom she and hers had sought the wilderness as their home. And the spirit of that wilderness entered into her as she dwelt in its boundaries; she drew from its breast some of its quiet and strength and truth, even as the aborigines had imbibed these qualities in their long communion with nature at her best. There was to come a time, and that right soon, when the reclamation of the wilderness should have so far progressed that there would be town life, on its borders at least, and the Puritan woman would lose some of the qualities which had been imparted to her by the land to which she had come as an alien and where she remained as a daughter; but until the coming of that time she was true to the inspiration of the country in which her lot was cast. America was then a land of mystery; back from the Atlantic stretched miles upon miles of untrodden, unknown wood and plain and hill and lake and river; and the power of the unknown was felt over that little strip of coast which acknowledged—though not in entire subjection—the control of the white race. So the Pilgrim

Mother had ever the sense of the mysterious, the unfathomable, pressing upon her, ever ready to whisper new secrets in her ear; and though she was as a rule stern and unimaginative, she was more profoundly affected by this mystery than she knew. It was to bear terrible fruit in after time in the horrors of Salem witchcraft; but for the present it only tried and proved and hardened the courage of the women who faced it with confidence in the strength of their husbands and in the protection of their God.

So to New England and Virginia there came the founders of a race led forth from home by different motives, bringing different qualities of body and mind and spirit to the formation of the people, but both foundations possessing strength upon which could be built a mighty nation. And not the men of Jamestown or Roanoke, with their fighting and their tilling, not the Pilgrim Fathers, with their stern courage and their strait creed, but the women of Virginia and the Pilgrim Mothers were those to whom must look that new nation for all its best. It was not the blood of kings and princes that came to vitalize this our land in the period of its rescue from the dominion of the lesser races, but the blood of yeomen and peasants, sprung from generations of fighters with the soil rather than with men, yet soldiers too, and so in all ways fitted for the battles they must wage with men and beasts and the earth itself ere they could win an empire for their race. And this blood comes down to us through the women of that day—the Mothers of a Nation.

Chapter V

The Early Colonial Period

V

THE EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD

THERE were many marked differences between the period of settlement and the early colonial period, which latter, for our present purpose, we may roughly class as that extending from 1630 to 1685. Of course the most salient difference was that in the colonial epoch there first appeared the racial American as we now know him—not the red man of the forest and plain, to whom such title was really due, but the white American, the son of the soil, but not of generations of dwellers thereupon,—the American as universally entitled to-day.

It must be remembered that there is no parallelism in the chronology of the beginnings of the North and the South. The Virginia colony was, in matter of time, far in advance of that on the shores of Massachusetts Bay, and the colonial period had fairly begun in the South when settlement was yet hardly established in the North. Many white children, native Americans, had succeeded Virginia Dare in the southern colony before Peregrine White made his appearance as the pioneer American of the New England dominion; and therefore the American type had to some extent become confirmed in the one section before it had been modelled in the other. So that synchronistic treatment of the development of the American race in its beginnings is impossible, and this tends to produce

confusion of statement and consequently of thought. It is fortunate for our present purpose, therefore, that the development of a distinct feminine type seems to have been almost confined to New England. The Virginia woman was not markedly individual; she had certain definite characteristics, even from the first, but these seem to have been rather of environment as modifying original race than of race as taking impression from environment. There were many reasons for this, which we shall consider later in the chapter; but for the present we will leave the woman of Virginia to turn to her younger but stronger sister of the North, the American Puritan woman.

If it be true—and denial is hardly possible—that during the period of settlement women played but a small part, at least as individuals, in the general result and progress, the same statement concerning the early colonial period, at least in New England, would meet with prompt and strenuous denial at the hands of history. We are accustomed to vaunt the present as the day of feminine influence in matters of human interest; but it may be doubted if, as far as our own country is concerned, the palm must not be awarded to the early days of the Puritan settlements. Such award may not be altogether to the liking of the fair sex, since the effect of the feminine influence was almost invariably in the direction of turbulence and revolt; but that effect was very intense and formative. It was chiefly in the matters of religion, or that which passed for such, that woman's influence was exerted and effectual; but it must be remembered that religion was the paramount subject in the consideration of the Puritan, whether male or female. None the worse for that, doubtless, were those staunch, if stern, followers of conscience; but one may be permitted to wish that they had been less unbending, less gloomy,—less Puritanical, in short,—in their ideas concerning that which

they termed Christianity. As in all else, it was the women who were the extremists in this matter; and fanaticism, persecution, and enthusiasm were by the women rather than the men maintained at a height of fervor, not to say frenzy, that stopped short not even at the taking of life to further its own ends or to crush the purposes of others.

Before entering into this more particular portion of our present subject, however, it may be well to cast a hurried glance at the status of woman in the Puritan settlements when these began to attain to the dignity of colonies. As early as 1631 we find the court of Plymouth sending for the elders and charging them to urge upon the conscience of the people that they should avoid the costliness of apparel which was beginning to be noted, as a detriment to the young colony; but, unfortunately, the worshipful court did not take into consideration all the circumstances of the case, for we read that "divers of the elders' wives were partners in the general disorder," and we may be entirely sure that the elders did not dare too strenuously to urge reform in this matter. Winthrop tells us that "little was done about it." So that even here we find feminine influence paramount, and on the side of disorder; and this was to be the history of the sex in New England for many a day, even though there were to be notable exceptions to the rule thus begun.

When we read the "Twelve Good Rules" of the infant colony, we are constrained to believe that some of them were framed with especial reference to women, and that they were dictated by some sad experiences. The twelve rules ran thus:

1. Profane no divine ordinance.
2. Touch no state matters.
3. Urge no healths.
4. Pick no quarrels.
5. Encourage no vice.

6. Repeat no grievances.
7. Reveal no secrets.
8. Maintain no ill opinions.
9. Make no comparisons.
10. Keep no bad company.
11. Make no long meals.
12. Lay no wagers.

Truly a Draconian code in its paternalism; but we are inevitably forced to the conclusion that the framers thereof had in their minds' eye their helpmeets when they laid down rules 6 and 8, while they must have smiled at one another when they wrote rule 7.

One of the first regulations of the infant colony was in regard to marriage, and ever and anon we find the Solons of the settlement laying down new legislation for the better enforcement of the marriage tie as a thing to breed accord rather than discord in the colony. It would seem that there was considerable trouble in regulating the matrimonial desires of maidens under guardianship and maid-servants, since in 1638 there was published a regulation which deserves quotation in whole, both for its quaintness of phraseology and for the light which it throws upon female servitude in the colony, whether undergone because of ties of blood or of bondage resulting from apprenticeship:

"Whereas divers persons unfit for marriage, both in regard of their yeong yeares, as also in regard of their weake estate, some practiseing the inveagleing of men's daughters and maids under gardians, contrary to their parents and gardians likeing, and of mayde servants, without leave and likeing of their masters: It is therefore enacted by the Court that if any shall make any motion of marriage to any man's daughter or mayde servant, not having first obtained leave and consent of the parents or master so to doe, shall be punished either by fine or

corporall punishment, or both, at the discretions of the bench, and according to the nature of the offence.

"It is also enacted, that if a motion of marriage be duly made to the master, and through any sinister end or covetous desire, he will not consent thereunto, then the cause to be made known unto the magistrates, and they to set down such order therein as upon examination of the case shall appear to be most equall on both sides."

While it would seem from the first part of this somewhat puzzlepated enactment that "yeong yeares" were considered as disabling one from "inveagleing" young ladies into the toils of matrimony, yet in cases where it was evident that the objection of the master of the maid servant was founded upon entirely personal grounds of his own gain there was recourse to a tribunal for the obtaining of justice. This portion of the law shows how careful were the old fathers of the country to encourage marriage wherever this could be done with no risk to the harmony of the settlement. We can also see how strict were the ideas of female servitude. Not only had the parent or guardian absolute power over the hand of the daughter or ward, but the master of an indentured servant could at least obstruct her matrimonial designs. In all these cases there was the same basal idea—the loss of service. The interest of the father in his daughter, of the guardian in his ward, and of the master in his maid servant were supposed to be identical and to be founded on actual loss sustained through the transference of right of service from them to an alien in the family. In this "fiction of the law" one can see the persistence of an idea as old as the status of woman as a mere chattel, and it is curious to note that in some phases it survives even unto the present day.

There are recorded numerous instances of the enforcement of the law which has been quoted. One Will Colefoxe, in 1647, was brought before the court at Stratford and fined five pounds for "labouring to inveagle the affection of Write his daughter;" and, among several other notable instances, we find Arthur Hubbard in 1660 fined the same amount as Colefoxe, the court this time being that of Plymouth, the complainant Thomas Prence, the Governor of the colony, and the charge that of "disorderly and unrighteously endeavoring to gain the affections of Mistress Elizabeth Prence." It would seem that Master Hubbard was as persistent as he was unrighteous, for after an interval of seven years we find him again mulcted of the same amount for the same offense regarding the same lady; but his patient waiting had its reward, as in a few months he became the happy husband of Mistress Prence.

Yet the law did not exclusively care for the father and threaten the suitor, for the latter, as we have seen, had recourse of law if he were unjustly rejected by the master of a "mayde;" and it would seem that this part of the statute was held to apply to the father as well, since in 1661 Richard Taylor obtained judgment against the father of Ruth Whieldon for interfering with the marriage of the young pair. Probably the court issued something in the nature of a perpetual injunction; but its task must have been most difficult in the case of another youth, Ralph Parker by name, who, having been sent about his business by the sire of his faire ladye, actually sued said sire for loss of time incurred in courting. Nor were there lacking maids to aid their lovers to avoid the penalty of the law. There is record of one Sarah Tuttle who was, on May Day in the year 1660, and in the colony of New Haven, while on an errand to a neighbor, Dame Murline, kissed by Jacob Murline in the very presence of his mother and

sisters. The chronicler,—doubtless with shocked feelings but not without a suggestion of a smacking of lips as well,—records that "they sat down together, his arm being about her and her arm upon his shoulder or about his neck; and hee kissed her, and she kissed him, or they kissed one another, continuing in this posture about half an hour, as Maria and Susan testified." Which, when one considers the detail, was doubtless very shocking; and we cannot wonder that Goodman Tuttle haled Murline into court on the charge of "inveagleing the affections of Sarah his daughter." But behold! Sarah, "being asked in court if Jacob inveagled her said, 'No!'" This was a baffling of justice, perhaps unprecedented; for only absolute "inveaglement" could constitute guilt under the statute, and the party most concerned denied the criminality of the accused by taking the guilt upon herself. It is no wonder that the scandalized court took occasion to call Sarah a "bould Virgin," and fined her a goodly amount, though on what count does not appear. Two years afterward half the fine was remitted, nor does it appear that the remaining moiety was ever paid; which seems just as well, since the real sufferer would probably have been Master Tuttle, the plaintiff, who would naturally be called on to pay his daughter's debt—which would have been a miscarriage of justice indeed.

It would seem from these accounts that matrimony was hedged about with difficulty in the time of the Puritans; but this was far from being the true state of the case. On the contrary, marriage was in every way given "incurridgement." In several towns bachelors about to change their condition were allotted tracts of ground from the commonwealth, and "maid lotts" were granted at Salem until frowned upon by that grand old Puritan, Endicott, who placed on the town records his opinion that

it were best to discontinue the custom and "avoid all presedents & evil events of granting lotts unto single maidens not disposed of." "Spinsters of uncertain age" were difficult to find in those days; the time and circumstances called for matrimony as a duty to the State as well as to oneself. The death of the sister-in-law of Governor Bradford was recorded with the addition of some words of wonder that, though ninety-one years of age, "she was a godly old maid never married." Yet even then there was a measure of respect for those women who refrained from matrimony, and some of these were commended for their choice. There is to be found in the *Life and Errors* of John Dunton an account of a maiden lady which is worth quoting, not only for the picture of the lady herself, but for the light which it throws upon some of the customs of its time,—which was, however, rather later than the days which have thus far been considered.

"It is true an *old* (or superannuated) Maid in Boston is thought such a curse as nothing can exceed it (and looked on as a *dismal* spectacle); yet she by her good nature, gravity, and strict virtue convinces all (so much as the fleering Beaux) that it is not her necessity but her choice that keeps her a Virgin. She is now about thirty years (the age which they call a *Thornback*) yet she never disguises herself, and talks as little as she thinks of Love. She never reads any plays or Romances, goes to no Balls or Dancing-match (as they do who go to such Fairs) to meet with Chapmen. Her looks, her speech, her whole behaviour are so very chaste, that but once, (at Governor's Island, where we went to be merry at roasting a hog) going to kiss her, I thought she would have blushed to death.

"Our *Damsel* knowing this, her conversation is generally amongst the women (as there is least danger from that sex) so that I found it no easy matter to enjoy her company, for most of her time (save what was taken up in needle work and learning French &c.) was spent in Religious Worship. She knew Time was a dressing-room for Eternity, and therefore reserves most of her hours for better uses than those of the Comb, the Toilet, and the Glass.

"And as I am sure this is most agreeable to the Virgin Modesty which should make Marriage an act of their obedience rather than their choice. And they that think their Friends too slow-paced in the matter give certain proof that lust is their sole motive. But as the Damsel I have been describing would neither anticipate nor contradict the will of her parents, so do I assure you she is against Forcing her own by marrying where she cannot love; and that is the reason she is still a Virgin."

The ideas of the old critic would hardly commend themselves in their entirety to modern times; yet they hold a germ of truth.

Marriage customs among the early colonists presented some curious contrasts. The practice of "bundling," probably imported from Wales, was long extant in the rural districts; yet in the same district in which this custom was most prevalent there was another practice of the opposite extreme of prudery, whereby those who were passing through the first and even intermediate stages of courtship were forced to "do their spiriting" in the presence of the household, the only license of propinquity granted to them being the privilege of whispering their words through a hollow stick about six feet long, known as a "courting-stick." The use of this as a conductor

ensured secrecy to the speech of love; but the enforced separation must have been terribly disheartening at times, and there must have been occasions when the lover longed to lay the stick upon the backs of the company and put them to flight. It must have been as difficult to be impassioned through this medium as nowadays to propose through a telephone.

There was abundant protection for wives in the early laws of the northern colonies. Bigamy was forbidden in a law which forbade a man to "marrie too wifes which were both alive for anything that can appear otherwise at one time," which strikes one as more well-meaning than lucid. The husband must not beat his wife or even abuse her with angry words, while she, on the other hand, if she gave vent to "a curst and shrewish tongue" was in danger of the stocks or the ducking-stool. The husband was not allowed to desert his wife for long or even to keep her in an outlying and dangerous situation, else the town "will pull his house down." Woman may have been regarded as the weaker vessel by the old Puritans, but they were determined that her interests should not be neglected, at least so far as in that age was well and customary.

Though marriage was in many ways hedged about with safeguards, there existed in the earliest times at Plymouth a form of public betrothal which too often was considered as sufficient by the parties thereto. It was called a pre-contract, but was not entirely binding. There was usually a sermon preached on the occasion of the ceremony, and it was the custom to allow the bride to choose the text which she thought most applicable to the general or particular circumstances of the case. Marriage was for long by banns, and the ceremony was at first performed by magistrates and not by clergymen. This fact, as well as the further fact that any "man of dignity" came under

the generic title of "magistrate" in the meaning of the custom, gave rise to many complications and no little scandal—as in the case of old Governor Bellingham, who when a widower of forty-nine married himself to Penelope Pelham, who was not half his age. This acting in the dual capacity of bridegroom and magistrate was a little too much for the patience of the community, and the governor was called upon to stand trial for his offence; but as he insisted upon his prerogative of occupying the bench the result was not edifying.

There were many local customs at marriages which were by no means admirable, such as the scrambling for the bride's garter, the bedding of the newly wedded pair, and like fashions, imported from the rural districts of England. These things were carried to such a length that restrictive laws were found necessary, and in 1651 "mixt and unmixt" dancing at taverns during wedding ceremonies was distinctly forbidden. Dancing may seem to us incongruous with the spirit of the old Puritan life; but dance they did, as is evident from the law referred to and from the fact that dancing persisted as an accompaniment of all weddings. Though a little out of its period, it may be recorded here that in 1769 there were danced at one wedding ninety-two jigs, fifty contra-dances, forty-three minuets, and seventeen hornpipes, all being safely accomplished by a little past midnight.

Enough of the general for the present; let us come to the particular in exemplification of the status of women among the old Puritans. In the beginning of this chapter the statement was made that women played a most prominent part in the religious polity of the northern colonies, and it is well that the assertion should now be established. The early history of New England holds the stories of more than one remarkable woman, and one of the most

remarkable among them was Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, who may be selected as in many regards a typical New England woman of the early colonial days. It is true that Mrs. Hutchinson was not an American by birth and had even passed some forty years of life when she first stood upon the shores of our country; but she was of those who invaded this land filled with the spirit of liberty that afterward took such strong root, and in the genius of her nature she was emphatically American. The old New England spirit found no better exposition than in this daughter by adoption, and it is for this reason that she has been chosen, being of one stock with the native Puritans, as typical of the woman of her time and country.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, who had been born in England about 1590, landed at Boston on September 18, 1634. She came in the name of religious liberty, seeking that freedom which she was denied in the land of her birth; but even on her voyage to our shores she had excited suspicions as to her orthodoxy, and there was some delay, probably at the instance of the Rev. Mr. Symms, her fellow passenger, in granting her membership in the first church of Boston. She had been somewhat free, according to Mr. Symms, in "venting her revelations" on the outward voyage; but her kindly attitude toward friends and acquaintances soon reconciled most of the Bostonians to her presence in their midst. The fact was that Mrs. Hutchinson was what was in those days known as a "notable" woman. She could be helpful to those in trouble in mind, body, or spirit, and she was skilful in a very comprehensive pathology. Welde, of Roxbury, tells us that she was "a woman very helpful in the time of childbirth and other occasions of bodily disease, and well furnished with means for those purposes." True, he also calls her "the American Jezabel;" but even in his blame of her he

admits, though he probably did not mean it as a compliment, that she was "of a nimble wit and active spirit and a very voluble tongue, more bold than a man, though in understanding and judgment inferior to many women." The latter part of this description simply meant that Master Welde did not agree with the theories promulgated by Mrs. Hutchinson.

And indeed it needed not to be very prejudiced to agree with Master Welde herein. For Mrs. Hutchinson, though she "sat under" Mr. Cotton and professed great love for his doctrines, was undoubtedly more than tainted by Antinomianism,—a word, in its broad acceptation, signifying the consciousness of "justification by faith," and an abiding justification that could not be shaken even by the commission of sin. Hence, said the enemies of the Antinomians, these latter took advantage of their presumed state of grace to live as they pleased, licentiously or cleanly, they being surely saved by their faith and therefore free to mould their works as they chose. This was carrying to its extreme the theory of sanctification professed by the Antinomians; yet it was not an unfair deduction from the tenets of that body. The Antinomians were looked upon as menaces to the morality of any land in which they took root, as pursuing pleasure and vice under the cloak of fanaticism. To make matters worse in the Boston colony just at this time with which we are concerned, the new governor, Henry Vane, was vehemently suspected of being an advocate of the hated sect; and therefore when Mrs. Hutchinson began to hold women's meetings at which she set forth her religious tenets, which were perilously close to Antinomianism,—though she, as well as her chief ally and brother-in-law, John Wheelwright, never admitted the applicability of the title,—there arose an outcry against these proceedings. Wheelwright

was brought to trial on certain counts, and he and Governor Vane, with Cotton himself,—he having been gradually brought into the controversy in a rather singular manner,—formed a party which was opposed to the mass of the Puritans and was considered little less than a scandal. At the end of a three weeks' session, held in Cambridge to deal with this matter of heresy, the first American clerical synod condemned the opinions of the recalcitrants, and then proceeded to adopt a resolution which is of more importance to us than was their general condemnation; it ran thus:

"That though women might meet (some few together) to pray and edify one another, yet such a set assembly (as was then in practice at Boston) where sixty or more did meet every week, and one woman (in a prophetical way, by resolving questions of doctrine and expounding Scripture) took upon her the whole exercise, was agreed to be disorderly and without rule."

Though this expression of opinion, for it was after all but little more, on the part of the synod was aimed at the special case of Mrs. Hutchinson, it is none the less of some general interest in its broad statement. Evidently the Puritans were at one with St. Paul in his opinion that women should be silent in the churches.

None the less for the fulminations of the synod did Mrs. Hutchinson continue to hold the meetings that were so repugnant to the elders of the colony; and by this time she had become a real power. That she was entirely convinced of the truth of her tenets, of the divine source of her "revelations," and of the honesty and purity of her own purpose is certain; that she was considerably influenced by a love of notoriety and an intense natural combativeness is at least probable. Opposition, especially that which took the form of contempt for her sex and

intelligence, only inflamed her the more; and soon she became really turbulent in her denunciations of the ruling powers. Matters became so grave, threatening not only the orthodoxy but the peace of the colony, that drastic methods were decided upon. John Wheelwright was first disfranchised and banished, and then Mrs. Hutchinson was summoned before the Court. The proceedings on the occasion of her arraignment may best be set forth in the words of Winthrop, that prejudiced yet trustworthy chronicler:

"The Court also sent for Mrs. Hutchinson, and charged her with divers matters, as her keeping two public lectures every week in her house, whereto sixty or eighty persons did usually resort, and for reproaching most of the ministers (viz., all except Mr. Cotton) for not preaching a covenant of free grace, and that they had not the seal of the Spirit, nor were able ministers of the New Testament: which were clearly proven against her, though she sought to shift it off. And after many speeches to and fro, at last she was so full as she could not contain, but vented her revelations, amongst which this was one, that she had it revealed to her that she should come into New England and should here be persecuted, and that God would ruin us and our posterity, and the whole State, for the same. So the Court proceeded and banished her; but, because it was winter, they committed her to a private house, where she was well provided, and her own friends and the elders permitted to go to her, but none else."

To the modern mind there is in that account merely the picture of an excitable, overwrought, hysterical woman, keyed to the pitch of rejoicing in martyrdom and "venting her revelations" to this end and under an impulse of enthusiasm. It seems impossible that she

should be taken seriously; yet perhaps the Court was in the right, for such a woman, at once intelligent and fanatical, may have been a greater threat to the community than it is possible for us to realize at this day.

Excommunication followed the sentence of the court, and her bearing under this ban confirms the opinion above expressed concerning her happiness in finding martyrdom; for we are told by Winthrop that "after she was excommunicated, her spirits, which seemed before to be somewhat dejected, revived again, and she gloried in her sufferings, saying that it was the greatest happiness, next to Christ, that ever befel her." She was to have plenty of that kind of "happiness" in her life, for Mr. Cotton, once her firm ally, pronounced against her the censure of the church, and even one of her sons deserted her in her adversity and took sides with her enemies; her husband appears to have been from the first either a very feeble ally or a silent disapprover of her methods. She was persecuted in many ways, even after her removal to Providence, Rhode Island, and certain maternal troubles, the result of physical causes, were gleefully taken advantage of by her enemies and chronicled as divine punishments for heresy. The latter part of her life must be written down a failure, though it held a brave struggle to maintain a gallant front to her foes; and when, in August, 1643, she fell one of the victims of an Indian massacre even her best friends must have felt that there was little cause to regret her fate. She had been in the colonies about two years before she began to preach, about four before she was excommunicated, and about nine before her death. In that time she had proved a firebrand and a disturber of the peace such as had not before been known and she had threatened to disrupt the colony of Boston and rend it into lasting separation. She had failed; but she had made manifest a danger.

She had done more than this. She had proved the possibility of woman as an element in the polity and progress of the State. In her way she was a pioneer. She was the first American woman to take a decided lead in matters of general interest. She was the first to hold meetings, to claim for her sex the privilege of freedom as claimed by the men of the Pilgrims. She was the first American woman to uprear the banner of her sex in the matter of independence; she may be said to have been the prototype of all the succeeding upholders of "women's rights." When Winthrop, at her trial, brought up the accusation of having held women's meetings, she quoted "a clear rule in Titus, that the elder women should instruct the younger." Then Winthrop asked her if she would instruct an hundred men if they desired it, to which she replied that she would not, but would instruct any one man who might so wish. She insisted positively upon her right to teach in her own way, and asked: "Do you think it not lawful for me to teach women, and why do you call me to teach the Court?" She may have been somewhat hazy as to her real theological creed, but she assuredly held clear ideas as to the rights of her sex.

Above all, and in this she was highly typical of the American woman of later days, she was an enthusiast. Contrary though the theory be to the general belief, the most salient and persistent trait among the Puritans was enthusiasm, however it hid itself behind a cold and contained exterior. It was their enthusiasm that made them what they were, that enabled them to found their portion of a mighty nation; they were the most intensely enthusiastic people that ever went to the making of a nation; not a Cavalier, not a Frenchman, not a Castilian, ever held the fire that burned in the spirit of these old Puritans, even though the stroke of iron was needful visibly

to call it from their flint. In Anne Hutchinson that overpowering quality of enthusiasm was to be found in a superlative degree, and thus, above all, we find in her the type of the coming woman of America.

Hardly had the echoes of the Antinomian controversy died away when there came to New England a yet more rending cataclysm, in which women were again the leading spirits. This was the "intrusion" of the Quakers. To us it may seem as absurd as wonderful that the noble doctrines of the Society of Friends should once have been regarded as especially dictated by the Father of Lies; but when the Quakers reached at last the shores of New England with their "pernicious doctrines," it seemed to the Puritans that the devil had been unchained in their midst. When on July 11, 1656, there arrived in the port of Boston a ship which among other passengers brought to the colony two women, Ann Austin and Mary Fisher, who were known to be members of the accursed sect, there ensued a general consternation which was well satirized by Bishop in his *New England Judged,* when he writes: "Two poor women arriving in your harbour so shook ye, to the everlasting shame of you, as if a formidable army had invaded your borders." It would require little less than a volume to set forth the reasons which caused the Puritans so to hate and fear the Quakers; but it is enough for our present purpose that we understand that not a plague of smallpox or cholera could have created such consternation as did the coming of these two feeble women. Mary Fisher, a most enthusiastic follower of Fox, had already undergone martyrdom in the attempt to spread the faith of her co-religionists, having been imprisoned in England for months and whipped "until the blood ran down her body." She was later to travel even as far as the dominion of the "Grand Turk" and hold speech with that potentate, and at

last to die, an old woman, at Charleston, South Carolina. When she and Ann Austin made their appearance in the harbor of Boston—more terrible to the Puritans than the sea-monster to Andromeda—they were promptly imprisoned and their tracts, with which they were of course provided, were burned in the market-place. They were held in bondage for some weeks and were then placed on board their ship and exiled. But they had done their work, if only in exciting terror, and the fire that consumed their tracts was to be a spark that lighted a great conflagration. When the General Court met, it passed a long and incendiary law against the coming of the Quakers, telling of their "divilish opinions," and providing for the fining and whipping of offenders. This did not keep away the detested sect, who believed that they were intrusted by God with a message to the world and would not be silenced. There were among them many devoted men; but there were yet more devoted women, and the second, like the first, "intrusion" of the Quakers was by women, Ann Burden and Mary Dyer. In August, 1657, arrived a pioneer in Mary Clark, who boldly proclaimed that she came with "a message from the Lord," and who found her welcome in the receipt of twenty stripes and banishment. Salem began to be known as a stronghold of the Quakers or at least of their admirers, and among others one Cassandra Southwick, an old woman, was imprisoned for sympathy extended to the Friends. Perhaps there was other reason as well, for under the date of March 9, 1660, we find that "Major Hawthorne, at dinner with the Gov. and Magistrates at a Court of Assistants, said that at Salem there was a woman, called Cassandra Southwick, that said she was greater than Moses, for Moses had seen God but twice, and his back, and she had seen Him three times, and face to face, instancing the places." Probably

Cassandra—ominous name!—was a fanatic who had become insane from a sense of self-importance, as was too often the case with religious enthusiasts, and had made herself obnoxious to the powers of the colony by her claims. We hear no more of her after her imprisonment; but she too was typical of a certain phase of New England femininity in those days.

It is in Mary Dyer, however, that we find the true type of the New England Quakeress—a type which persists in more than one aspect of the American woman. Believing that she was sent by God with His words to mankind, she would not be hushed from uttering them. Sent away from Boston on her first appearance there, she soon returned and preached the "infamous" doctrines of her sect—"peace and goodwill toward men." In the interval between her visits the offence of which she was guilty in preaching the creed of the Quakers had been made capital—one of the deepest blots that rest upon even this speckled period of New England history. Mary Dyer felt that in returning to Boston to preach she was going to her death; but she held it her duty, and she did not shrink. On September 14, 1659, she was condemned to banishment or death, if she did not leave within two days; but it was no desire to escape the ultimate penalty that led her on this occasion to return to her Rhode Island home, for on October 8th she once more appeared in Boston. She was at once arrested and with two other Friends was condemned by the Court "to suffer the poenalty of the lawe (the just reward of their transgression) on the morrow." One sees a twinge of conscience in the clause in parentheses, as excusatory of themselves to posterity. Mary Dyer, however, though included in the original sentence, was, on the intercession of her son, reprieved from death and her sentence commuted to banishment, "to be forthwith

executed if she returned. In the meanwhile she was to go with the other two condemned to the place of execution, and to stand upon the gallows with a rope about her neck till her companions were executed." She went to her ignominious punishment "as to a Wedding Day" and heartened her companions for their trial—though they needed no encouragement. Moreover, she did not wish to accept her own life at the hands of those who had made the unjust law under which her companions suffered, she probably believing that the already large number of Quaker sympathizers would be enlarged by the spectacle of a woman put to death for her faith. Probably, too, she was of the same enthusiastic spirit as Anne Hutchinson, that rejoiced in martyrdom. At all events, though once more banished, she reappeared in Boston, and in little more than six months from the date of her last sentence she was once more before the Court upon the charge of "rebelliously returning into this jurisdiction, notwithstanding the favour of this Court towards her," and she was sentenced to die on June 1st. On that day she accordingly went to her death, as calmly and triumphantly as to the crown of her life, as indeed the moment probably seemed to her.

It is difficult to gauge the character of Mary Dyer, who may be taken as the type of the New England Quaker of her day, even though she was of alien birth. That she was a woman of pure and holy spirit there can be no doubt; and though her persistent affronting of death may seem to savor of fanaticism, it was fanaticism, if at all, of that sort which inspired the early Christian martyrs. She was utterly sincere; and sincerity may plead forgiveness for any mere error.

In Anne Hutchinson and Mary Dyer we have seen two types of the New England woman as leaders of men. The

former was perhaps more of a power, the latter of an influence; but each was complement to the other, not in task but in type. It needs no wonderful discernment to see in these women the rise and florescence of the New England spirit which has come down to our own day and has permeated and informed the whole American genius of femininity. Through their descendants—in some cases unworthy of their ancestors, whom they deserted or even betrayed—the blood of Mrs. Hutchinson and Mrs. Dyer is with us; but that is of less moment than the survival of their spirit, of the independence of the American woman when convinced of right, of her steadfastness in following her impulses, undeterred by sneers or even bodily perils. Though they were not directly of the Puritan mothers, not directly of the stock which has most numerically survived, the names of Anne Hutchinson and Mary Dyer are deserving of honorable memorial as among the first founders of the feminine republic of America.

They were pioneers also. Anne Hutchinson was the first woman preacher of whom we have record on these our shores, and she was the first of the many religious "prophetesses" who were to rise up and for a time draw men and women to them because of their personality rather than from any merit in their tenets. It was probably far less that which Mrs. Hutchinson preached than that which she was that brought to her meetings those "seventy or eighty" devoted women who looked upon her as one inspired. Mary Dyer had no following, was, like Him she preached, "despised and rejected of men"; but she was in a sense the protomartyr among women in our country, and she kindled a flame which in another guise rose to a gigantic conflagration when the time came for women to speak fearlessly and openly their thoughts concerning great matters.

That our picture may know some completeness, however, it is needful to glance at the effect of these women and others like them upon the female world of New England. While Anne Hutchinson in some sense stood alone of her sex, Mary Dyer was only one of a great number of devoted men and women, merely singled out by her fate for enduring memory. The women of the Quakers, driven by the Spirit, went through the land preaching, in defiance of all the laws that were fulminated against them. We must not be too sudden or violent in our condemnation of the men who sat in judgment upon these people, for to the Puritan the Quaker represented a peril which in this day we cannot comprehend, while the Puritan had also the excuse for harshness that he owned the land and only desired the Quaker to remain outside his borders. Yet, when this is said, we can but give the most hearty admiration to the superb courage of the people who believed it to be their duty to intrude where they were not desired, and, believing, shrank from no consequence of their faith. Their women, with whom we have most particularly to do, suffered grievously for their devotion; they were whipped at the cart's tail, they were maimed, they were branded, they were even hanged; yet they persisted. By their devotion they not only gained many adherents—rarely open sympathizers, but secret friends—but set a standard for womanhood. Gradually the Puritan camp, under the constancy of their foes, became divided. The majority of the Puritans, and especially of their women, grew more and more virulent as the Quakers persisted in their "intrusion"; but there was among the women an element, ever growing and strengthening, which found inspiration in the methods of those whom they had at first contemned. They had themselves suffered for their faith, though not as these others; and they found a respect for those who

shrank from no penalty so that they might testify to their faith and do service. It is after the coming of the Quakers that we find the New England woman more determined, more active, more bound to high ideals. The mark of the despised Quakers remained deeply graven, in effect if not in heredity, on the New England character, especially in its women. Moreover, the example of the female preachers of the Quakers had its effect in urging upon the New England woman hitherto undreamed-of possibilities of making herself heard in the councils of the land. Seeing what women could do as well as bear, the New England woman was made stronger for both, and she did not forget the lesson which came to her through those whom at first she received with hatred and despite.

Such were the great religious feminine uprisings and revolts in New England. Woman had proved that she was capable of establishing at least a partial independence, had shown that she was gradually coming to be a force that would have to be reckoned with in future estimates of the commonwealth. It is true that the fathers of the land did not read the signs of the times and believed the new movement of feminine progress to be but sporadic and of certain termination in the near future; but they had some excuse for their blindness in the existence and nature of another feminine movement which placed the female nature in a most unenviable light,—that of witchcraft.

Under the chronological system which has been adopted—though it has been stretched several times nearly to the breaking-point—it becomes necessary to treat of witchcraft in New England in two separate chapters, the Salem outbreak falling by date within the later period of colonization.

Before we too greatly blame our forefathers and foremothers for their superstition and cruelty in the matter of

witchcraft, it may be well to remember a few facts in connection with the subject. Such men as Cranmer, Bacon, Luther, Melancthon, and Kepler have recorded their belief in witchcraft, and as late as 1765 Blackstone wrote: "To deny the possibility, nay, actual existence of witchcraft and sorcery is at once flatly to contradict the revealed word of God in various passages both of the Old and New Testaments; and the thing itself is a truth to which every nation in the world hath, in its time, borne testimony either by example, seemingly well attested, or by prohibitory laws which at least suppose the possibility of commerce with evil spirits." Blackstone was not unenlightened; and so we can see that a belief in the actual and present existence of witchcraft was not inexcusable in our New England forbears. Belief in witchcraft was prevalent in England down to the nineteenth century; and even in the English Church in the seventeenth century there was a canon which forbade clergymen to cast out devils without being duly licensed to do so, and such licenses were actually issued by the Bishop of Chester. It must also be remembered that America was considered, by virtue probably of the color of its aborigines, to be the peculiar domain of His Satanic Majesty, who delighted in dwelling within its shores. Hence it would have been rather strange if there had not arisen in the colonies accusation of witchcraft. This, however, does not preclude our sympathy with the victims or our conclusions as to the nature of the women who believed in such charges and as to the civilization which condemned the witches to death. For it was usually on charges brought by women against women that there came accusation of witchcraft; the men were rarely more than judges and executioners. Thus the subject falls well within our scope of discussion and narration.

The first New World victim of such an accusation was Margaret Jones, who, in 1648, was condemned at Charlestown, where she lived, and was duly hanged. The ground of accusation seems to have been that Goody Jones, as she was called after the fashion of the day, was a medical practitioner who did not believe in venesection or in the use of violent emetics, but worked her cures by means of herbs and simples, and thus aroused the jealousy and distrust of the regular physicians. The case is instructive as showing the very slight grounds that were sufficient to bring about a charge of witchcraft; and it is also instructive, as demonstrating the childlike credulity of some of the strongest men of the time, that Governor Winthrop, who presided at the trial of Goody Jones, records as a proof of the woman's guilt that at the hour of her execution there came "a very great tempest in Connecticut which blew down many trees." There were at least two other victims within the next two years; but in 1656 we find a case that is really startling, as showing the ranks into which the prevalent superstition could penetrate as a fatality. In that year was hanged on Boston Common Mistress Ann Hibbins, whose husband had been a member of the Council of Assistants and an esquire, and whose brother, Richard Bellingham, was deputy-governor of Massachusetts. We know very little of the merits of this case, which is unfortunate, as the facts would undoubtedly be interesting, looking to the high social standing of the victim. Mistress Hibbins was tried before Endicott, and we may be sure that that stern old Puritan paid no attention to the social position of the accused. We know that the Rev. John Norton, who had breathed fire and flame against the Quakers and was no friend to any who disturbed the peace of the colony, held that Mistress Hibbins was wrongfully done to death and declared that she was

condemned "only for having more wit than her neighbors;" and he tells us that the circumstance which held most weight against her was her remark, on seeing two people inimical to her talking together, that she was sure that they were talking about her. It would not seem that magic was needed to suggest such a conclusion; but the judges thought that no one but a witch could have divined such an abstruse fact, and Mrs. Hibbins suffered for her feminine penetration.

Acquittals were not unknown, but they were rare. But whether acquitted or not, those accused of witchcraft, who were not seldom women of extremely refined and gentle natures, were subjected to many indignities as well as great cruelties during the time they rested under suspicion or charge. These outrages, effected for the purpose of proving or testing the witches, were in some cases of such a nature as to make it undesirable to do more than allude to them. In like manner, the punishments on conviction were often carried out in a manner revolting to the delicacy of the condemned. It is recorded, however, that on one occasion, where the accused had confessed to doing most wonderful things, the jury, marvellously gifted with common sense, simply found that said accused had lied in the confession, whereupon the court passed sentence of a fine or a whipping; but such a jury was very rare, and one of the most remarkable features of the whole matter is found in the confessions of the self-styled witches. When Goody Glover, in 1688, was accused of having bewitched a child named Margaret Goodwin, in revenge for an accusation of theft, she was visited in prison by Cotton Mather, and to him she confessed that she had made a compact with the Evil One and was in the habit of frequenting Sabbats held by him. She had been sentenced, and the confession could do her no possible good or harm; it and all of its kind must

have been dictated by a sheer hysterical nervousness or else by a fanatical craze for notoriety. Indeed, it was in those days a badge of distinction, albeit a perilous one, to be declared a witch; and next in fame was to enjoy the reputation of having been bewitched by some noted sorceress. Of this latter insanity the above-named Margaret Goodwin was a notable example. Though but a child, she was shrewd enough to enjoy the attention which she excited as a victim of witchcraft; and she steadfastly refused to be cured, even though Cotton Mather, then but a young preacher, took her into his own home for treatment. As a somewhat peculiar and in some ways characteristic product of her time and place Margaret Goodwin deserves a moment's attention from us. She was a perfect little elf in shrewdness and she could act like a Rachel. She was determined that she would not lose the notoriety and the comfortable home which she had found, so she played her part to perfection. Mather hated Quakers, Catholics, and even the Church of England; so Margaret found that she could read most easily Quaker or "Popish" tracts as well as the Book of Common Prayer, but not a word in the Bible or any Puritan work. What symptoms of the workings of the devil could seem surer to a man of Mather's prejudices and sympathies? Then again Margaret could not be prevailed upon to enter Mather's study, and would scream and kick like a young donkey until she was dragged by force into the room, when she would become calm and assert that the devil had just fled from her in the form of a mouse, unable to endure the presence of the sacred works which lined the walls. Probably she had learned these things from the old dames of her native village, with their remnants of Teutonic folklore; but the strange part of the affair was that Cotton Mather, who tells us all these details, had no doubt whatever of the genuineness of the

possession. If the accusers of Goody Glover were typical of the credulity and superstition of their age, Margaret Goodwin, with her shrewd ability to make use of the most salient tendencies and prejudices of her benefactor in order to deceive him, was a type of a certain other aspect of Puritanism which has not yet entirely died away—and never will as long as New England possesses individuality of human product. So that even the minx who fooled Cotton Mather to the top of his bent seems to be worthy of rescue from obscurity in this retrospect of the path by which American women have reached their present position and characteristics.

It may be objected to the women whose names appear in this chapter that they were not typical New England women, but were only typical of phases of New England life in the early days of the colonies. Whether or not this allegation be just, we can assuredly learn from their stories and characters much of the atmosphere in which lived the New England woman of the greater part of the seventeenth century. She was at once a product and a producer, a cause and an effect, of her environment. There was constant action and reaction; she molded her time and her time molded her. She lived, as we have seen, if we have rightly understood that which we have read, in an atmosphere of religious turmoil and energy, of purity of purpose and integrity of faith, and of the darkest and most narrowing superstition. All these things acted mentally and spiritually upon the woman of New England. They entered into her life and character; she was energized as well as controlled and directed by them. There was of course no steadfastness, no persistence, of one straitly-hewn type; but there was an ever-recurring tendency, a gradual advance along the line of least resistance. Many were the faults of the Puritan woman: she was cold, she was

hard, she was fanatical, she was credulous; but she was virtuous, she was truthful,—in higher sense than mere veracity,—she was faithful,—in deeper sense than mere constancy,—and she was strong with a strength that came to her from resistance to the influences which sought her downfall. And she was deep—deep with the depth of the sea and the forests and the universal spirit of the new land that had made her its child.

She was sternly repressed. Subjection to her husband was a rule of the Puritan woman's life, accepted by her as rightful and even necessary. For it she found Biblical authority, and that was sufficient for her in all things. Yet, though literally and not merely nominally under the rule of her husband, the Puritan woman never thought of herself as a slave, either to a man or a system. Privately she might be a scold and a shrew,—if she had not the fear of the ducking-stool or the scold's bridle before her eyes,—but publicly she was under tutelage, and respected herself, even as she was respected, none the less on that account. It was a matter of time and place; it was a self-imposed condition rather than the survival of barbarism, as it is considered to-day by the theorists of femininity.

So, at the close of the early period of colonization, when the land was beginning to thrill with the first stirrings of nationality, the Puritan woman, not yet a type though strongly individual, stood looking into the future as one that sees but does not fear the coming time of need and responsibility. No longer English, not yet American, she stood a transition product, but one that was to find result in a permanency that would lay the strongest impress upon the nation that was to arise in after years.

Meanwhile, there was advancing in another portion of our country—a portion so remote from New England as practically to be a different land in all but ties of birth—a

feminine civilization of a type widely different from that of Massachusetts and Connecticut. The Northern culture was strongly and preëminently democratic in its origins; that of the South, before the close of the period now under consideration, had come to be as preëminently aristocratic. Beginning in the same way as that of Massachusetts,—even with lower origin, since for a time it threatened to be a mere penal settlement,—Virginia soon began to attract to herself a class of adventurers widely differing from those who sought religious liberty on the bleak shores of Plymouth Bay.

Differing from the general rule in such matters, in Virginia it was the better class which survived, the convict class being gradually submerged by the persistence of the higher grade of immigrants. It must not, however, be forgotten in recalling the origin of the Virginian feminine culture that even among the convicts there were many who were mere prisoners of state and were of birth and standing the equal of any free men whom they left behind them in England. Nor are origins of so much concern as results; it is only where the former are evidently and persistently causal that they need dwelling on in this work. Therefore, we will pass from Virginia in the act of formation to Virginia as settled by a people who were as individual in their way, though a most diverse one, as their brethren of New England; but before completing the journey from Massachusetts to Virginia let us pause for a moment at an intermediate colony, to commemorate the deed of another woman pioneer in America, Mistress Margaret Brent, of Maryland, the first American woman to demand equal rights with men in the councils of state, the prototype of every female reformer of later times.

It is necessary to suppose the reader familiar with the government and affairs generally in that peculiar

palatinate, the colony of Lord Baltimore in Maryland. On the 9th of June, 1647, Leonard Calvert, the Governor of Maryland and vice-gerent of Lord Baltimore, died at St. Mary's, then the capital of the colony. He was attended during his fatal illness by his kinswomen, Mistresses Margaret and Mary Brent, and the former was made administrator to his estate. From this resulted an unprecedented incident, when in January, 1648, the new governor having called a session of the Assembly, Mistress Margaret Brent appeared in the council chamber and demanded "to have a vote in the House for herself and another as his Lordship's [Lord Baltimore] attorney." Upon the refusal of the Assembly, shocked at such a revolutionary demand, to consider the matter, Mistress Brent "protested in form against all the proceedings of that Assembly, unless she might be present and vote as aforesaid." Her protest did her very little good, unless it be well to have one's name handed down as a baffled reformer, but she thus won for herself at least a right to have her name placed on the pages of any volume dealing with the progress of the women of America. As far as there is any record, Margaret Brent was absolutely the first woman who ever even dreamed of being accorded equal rights of citizenship in a commonwealth of modern times, though antiquity could show other examples. She was at all events the first American woman to demand the privilege of the ballot and of a share in the government of her country; and her demand was based on the same foundation as that of her sisters in later times, that of the rights conferred by the care of property and a stake in the welfare of the commonwealth. The women reformers of our day should promote Margaret Brent to the position of their patron saint and protomartyr.

Let us resume the journey to Virginia and study as best we may the aspects of feminine culture as found in the

great Southern colony. Unfortunately, even in general matters there is great dearth of authoritative record of Virginia colonial days, and in the matter of the doings of individual women, or even of the sex generally, we find but little of interest. We can only gather up the fragments and judge from them of the feast of which they tell.

Though Maryland may be considered a southern colony, and was indeed so regarded, we must not take Margaret Brent as representative of the feminine status or spirit in the South. The women of Virginia in the early colonial days were less independent, less assertive, than their sisters of New England, where women, as we have seen, occasionally took the lead in matters of public import. It was not so in Virginia. There women were held in less account, though not in less respect, than in the northern colonies. This was caused by a multiplicity of reasons, chief among which is the fact that in Virginia there was far greater difference of rank and station than in the North. The consequence of this was that, while in New England the woman was a needful and recognized adjunct of the home, that unit on which was based the civilization of the North, in Virginia she was more of ornament than necessity. Hence, while in the councils of New England woman had made herself felt and recognized as a power and thus had come to be held in mental esteem as a sex, though not always overtly, as we have seen, she was in Virginia still the lady, the almsgiver, the comforter and inspirer, but not the fellow-laborer, the equal in danger and toil and therefore in counsel. For it cannot be denied, save by him who has studied history with blind eyes, that in the matter of descent the colonists of Virginia were far superior to those who made to blossom the bleak shores of Massachusetts Bay. On both records there are too many blots of birth to make it safe for the ancestral tuft-hunter

to delve very deep into the past in his search on American soil; but the balance of rank is with the Virginian. Therefore it is that, while we instinctively regard the early New England woman, taken collectively, as a worker, a true colonist, we turn to the representative Virginia woman of the same day with the expectation of seeing a dame dressed in a short skirt of divers colors, with huge ruff and high-heeled shoes, with mincing gait and some pretty little affectations of speech and bearing, and we are not disappointed in the expectation.

There is another very important influence in the result of Southern culture as discriminated from that of the North,—the existence of slavery. Though in some of the Northern colonies there was Indian slave labor, there was but little of pure menial service in the household itself. The New England woman, as we shall see more clearly in the next chapter, was her own servant; she was the worker as well as the lady of the house. It was not so in Virginia. From the day—ill-omened in many respects, but powerful in formative effect upon the culture it modified—when the Dutchman left behind him his twenty negro slaves, the conditions of servitude in the Virginia plantations were altered; and when the plantations had become a colony, slavery was well established. It was still held in disfavor by many, at home and abroad; but it had come to remain for years and even centuries. The consequence of the importation and constant increase of slave labor was felt in many ways, but in none so strongly as in the conditions of the household. The Virginia lady had her troops of servants—not so many at first, but still in sufficient numbers to save her any need of personal labor, while her sister of the North was compelled, because of circumstances if not of choice, to do with her own hands the daily tasks that arise in the

well-ordered household. True, this difference was not so marked at the time which we are immediately considering as it became soon afterward. It is stated that in 1649 there were in Virginia but three hundred negro slaves; and, though the strict accuracy of such computation may be doubted, it may be admitted as substantially correct. But there was rapid and constant increase, and long before the end of the early colonial period slavery had become an established institution and had produced the effects upon Virginia society which were later to take such emphasized shape. The Virginia lady of the colonial period was teaching as a mistress of the manor rather than as a housewife. She was less notable in her accomplishments of "huswifery" than were the women of New England; but she had charms which they lacked, the charms that come from opportunity to indulge the impulse of refinement.

Of course all Virginia in its feminine element was not made up of the cream bubbles of society. There was the lower stratum as well; there were even strata, diminishing in numbers as in importance as one neared the bottom of the pail. There were in Virginia, as in New England, laws which show that the Virginia woman was not always a lady or at least did not always "demean herself as such." We find, for instance, that there is an enactment which determines that "women causing scandalous suits" are to be ducked; and for the furtherance of this penalty there shall be set up "neere the court house in every county," besides a pillory, stocks, and a whipping post—a ducking-stool. This same ducking-stool, which was an importation from England and not an American innovation, consisted of a pole, with a rude chair fastened to the end, hanging over a pond or stream, the pole being so balanced that anyone seated in the chair, and secured there, might be lowered into the water, held therein until

drowning was imminent, and then again hoisted to air and life. This weapon of an offended justice was, in Virginia as in New England, made the penalty for divers offences, and the language of one act is amusing in its evidently masculine origin, where it condemns to the ducking-stool "brabling women who often slander and scandalize their neighbors, for which their poor husbands are often brought into chargeable and vexatious suits and cast in great damages." That "poor" is significant of experience and consequent wrath.

Yet, while these and similar precautions against feminine dominance by force prove the existence, if we did not know of them otherwise, of degrees in Virginia feminine station, the representative Virginia woman was of more pampered and easier existence than was her sister of the North. In New England as well there were toward the end of the early colonial period well defined strata of society; but they were neither so far separated nor so marked as were those of Virginia. The New England dame was called "Goody" or "Mistress" according to her social standing, the latter title being for long reserved for the spouse of a knight; the "Goodies" were not only enormously in the majority, but they were types of the popular existence. The Virginia woman was softly nurtured and clad in purple and fine linen,—the latter literally after a time; the New England woman was expected to do her duties to her husband as he to her, and her garb was homespun.

Even the conditions of ordinary life were different in the two great colonies. New England existence was from the first a segregation; there was a constant tendency to draw together in towns. In Virginia, on the other hand, there was a tendency to differentiation of residence; beginning as a chain of plantations the colony continued in

this character. The consequence was a number of small feudalities in outward aspect and the assumption by the Virginia lady of the position of the *châtelaine*. Each of the great ladies was a little queen, ruling over a certain number of acres and subjects; and this attribute of the colony, at first accidental and of small scope, grew into a condition. Now, this existence, and the tendencies that brought it about, were far more English than were the conditions of the northern colonies; and so it is that in early Virginia we find far less individuality of femininity than we find in early New England. England held her influence in Virginia,—the England of the royal court; for it must be remembered that Virginia was strongly loyal. She never accepted the rule of the Roundhead; and the influx of the Cavaliers, some of their own wills and some on compulsion as political convicts, not only confirmed Virginian politics but Virginian manners. More English than England itself, these eager Carolists never acknowledged a hiatus in the rule of the Stuarts, and the Restoration found them entirely in accord with its returning theories and the majority of its practices. But not all, for Virginia had some morals left her even after the coming of the Cavaliers.

An incident in connection with "Bacon's Rebellion" will indicate the esteem and place in which women were held in the days when Berkeley ruled Virginia as its nominal governor and real emperor,—the culminating days of the period with which we have to do. The stalwart rebel, being in danger of attack before he was ready, sent into the surrounding country and gathered in the wives of several of the prominent gentlemen who were themselves in the camp of his antagonist, the autocratic Berkeley. We are told that it is probable that these ladies were brought to the stronghold of the rebel in their carriages,

which shows in itself the advance of Virginian luxury beyond that of New England, where a pillion was all that could be expected by any but the most modish people; for Bacon rebelled in 1676, and coaches were not general in New England until nearly two decades later, though we are told that John Winthrop had one in 1685. The ladies were brought to Bacon's camp at "Greenspring," whether afoot, on pillions, or in carriages, but assuredly "sorely against their wills." There have been handed down to us the names of four of these ladies: "Madame Bray, Madame Page, Madame Ballard and Madame Bacon,"— the latter a connection of the rebel himself. They were treated courteously enough in some ways, but they were informed that they would be held as hostages for the forbearance of Sir William until preparations had been made for his reception; and still greater precautions were taken against attack, as will be seen.

For Mr. Bacon, though he had the repute of a *preux chevalier,* yet sent one of the ladies to inform her husband and those of the other dames that he meant to place the ladies "in the forefront of his men" while the fortifications were in progress, thus securing his forces against attack by interposing the shield of sacred femininity between them and their enemies. When the "white-aproned" herald delivered her message, "the poor gentlewomen were mightily astonished, and neather were their husbands void of amazement at this subtill invention." No wonder; for though as a conception the words of General Bosquet, *C'est magnifique!* might have been applied, certainly they would needs be followed by the rest of the famous saying, *mais ce n'est pas la guerre!* The chronicler of the affair continues in a strain which is worthy of at least partial quotation for its sardonic humor. "If Mr. Fuller thought it strange that the Divell's black garde should be

enrouled God's soldiers," he says, the husbands "made it no less wonderful that their innocent and harmless wives should thus be entred a white garde to the Divell. And this action was a method in war that they were not well acquainted with—that before they could come to pierce their enemy's sides they must be obliged to dart their weapons through their wives brest." The "Divell" of the foregoing is of course Bacon himself; and really, when we think of the poor ladies set in their "white aprons" on the breastworks, not sure whether they have most to fear from front or rear, from friend or foe, we are tempted to consider the title well bestowed. Yet Bacon was generally held to be a man of gallantry as well as a gallant man; but the incident is not to the point. At last "the guardian angells withdrew into a place of safety," the works being finished; and, strange to say, we hear no more concerning them, though they were left in the camp of the rebels when Berkeley's troops were repulsed, and what befel them during the subsequent triumph—a brief one—of the Baconian forces and the burning of Jamestown we are not told. It is to be hoped that they were restored to their homes with more courtesy than they were brought thence.

Bacon's antagonist, Sir William Berkeley, did not prove himself more gallant or considerate to women than the defeated rebel. After Bacon had been defeated and had wisely died, the wife of Major Cheeseman, one of the captured rebels, was present during the interrogation of her husband by Berkeley, and when the latter demanded Cheeseman's reasons for rebelling, the lady very courageously came forward and prevented his reply by telling the enraged Sir William that "It was her provocation that made her husband join in the cause that Bacon contended for; if he had not been influenced by her instigations he

had never done that which he had done;" and then, kneeling to Berkeley, she continued, "Since what her husband had done was by her means, and so by consequence she most guilty, she prayed that she might be hanged and he pardoned." It was a womanly and wifely speech; and those who are unacquainted with the character of Berkeley will find it difficult to believe that he answered her by a proposition so gross and insulting that it proved him utterly wanting the true instincts, however he may have had the veneer, of a gentleman, as well as in understanding of a woman's heart. Cheeseman was not hanged, however; but he died in prison, and the circumstances were thought mysterious, so that Berkeley was not held guiltless of the death.

In the narrated incidents we can find a point of contrast between the female cultures of the North and the South. We can well imagine a Puritan wife addressing a dignitary as Mrs. Cheeseman addressed Governor Berkeley; but it is impossible to fancy Puritan women in the situation in which those "white gardes of the Divell" found themselves. The former would never have submitted to the degradation; they would not, for their lives, have so hampered the hands of their husbands. It was not the pioneer woman of a new continent who stood upon those ramparts and made their own breasts the shields of their enemies, but the delicately reared and nurtured woman of a pampered class. Yet that there was good courage among these fine ladies is shown, if showing were necessary, in the example of Mrs. Cheeseman; but it was not universal as among the women of the Puritans, though both its presence and absence formed but a general rule to which there were many and important exceptions.

With all their divergences and differences, however, there was between the North and South one point of

contact which was typical, racial, and individual, and which in its persistence grew to be national. It was of course a continuation of Anglo-Saxon tradition, applied to new circumstances which made it but the more powerful in influence; but it was a tradition which was to be potent in the formation of the American spirit. This was the home. For the home, as we know it, is almost, if not entirely, uniquely American and English. There may be entered a saving clause concerning the Teutonic nations, but it would not impeach the full integrity of the statement. Only in the Anglo-Saxon races has the home possessed the peculiar sanctity which it holds in this day among those same peoples; and in America this has been distinctively the case. For a race of pioneers, which builds in the desert its own continuing cities, sees in its edifices, however humble at first, something which is not evident to the inhabiter of ancient cities. The dweller in the wilderness gazes with a peculiar affection upon the little tract which he has reclaimed; and the cottage or even hut, with its humble household gods and goods, takes in his eyes a strange and extrinsic value because of that which they represent to him, in achievement and of necessity.

Therefore, north and south, the first thought of the pioneer settler was to establish the home; and the first requisite of the home is its presiding deity, the wife. Thus the American woman had from the first a peculiar value in the eyes of her husband; she was more surely "flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone" than were other wives, for she shared of necessity all his perils and triumphs, while his work was patiently done for her as for himself. She represented to him his gage to fortune as well as his best-beloved and most-needed companion; and she was necessary to him. This attitude of the husband, unexpressed, perhaps uncomprehended, was none the less

effective in forming the womanly ideal of the home. Because that home had been gained—in the aggregate at last, in the individual at first—by the sweat of her goodman's brow and was maintained and guarded by the labor of his hands and the courage of his heart, therefore the American wife was conscious of a peculiar duty toward the husband, a peculiar tenderness toward the home, which to her represented as much as to him.

In this way and for these reasons the sanctity of the American home became peculiarly marked, and there arose in that home an atmosphere of holiness and purity that was in contrast to the households of other nations at that day. There is no more appropriate place than this, on the border line of the two epochs of colonization, when the American type began to be defined and recognized, for a brief glance at the American home in its spiritual features. As with the homes in rural England, but differing in this respect, as in so many others, from the city life of the mother country, the purity of the home was its most noteworthy and carefully conserved feature. In many respects there was likeness between the home of America and that of Holland; certainly, though in many aspects the resemblance failed, there was a closer resemblance than between the former and the home in any other nation. Whether this came from the brief sojourn of the Pilgrims in Holland cannot be said with certainty, though it seems most improbable; the greater likelihood is that the conditions which prevailed in colonial America were those best adapted to the genius of the Dutch people in the matter of domesticity, as later shown in the somewhat similar conditions and results in South Africa. Certain it is that the American home, like that of Holland, was in all ways, materially and morally, preëminently *clean*. There are many faults to be attributed to our ancestors north

and south; but they had great virtues as well, and this of cleanliness in the home was one, and a great one. Even at this early day there was plenty of roystering and even vice in the colonies, more especially in Virginia, where the gay young blades ruffled it in imitation of the sparks of the court of the Stuarts; but the home was still preserved free from contamination. Woman was from the first held as a sacred thing, as a being to be reverenced and even worshipped, not with the affected gallantry of the English cavaliers or the French exquisites, but in all honesty and honor. They knew her value, these men of the old colonies; and they felt that an affront to her purity and virtue was a blow at the very foundation of the country they were learning to love. So it was that in America, as nowhere else, woman was in the mid-colonial days held in honor and honest reverence, and so it was that the American home, founded amid the clamor of the war-whoop and standing as the true stronghold of civilization, grew to be the finest emblem of the spirit of the new land and the noblest monument to the character and influence of its women.

Chapter VI

The Later Colonial Period

VI

THE LATER COLONIAL PERIOD

THOUGH perhaps rather a ramification than an inherent part of the history of woman, the subject of dress among the female colonists, at least in New England, is one of too great interest to permit it to be passed over in silence in a book concerning the women of America. From the very first—retracing our steps somewhat in order to obtain a complete view of the matter—the question of female dress was one that in New England was constantly giving grave offence and even scandal to the more serious of the colonists. Sumptuary laws were passed again and again, their very repetition showing how helpless was legislation to cope with the conditions confronting it in the matter of feminine love for gauds. As early as 1634 there was enacted a law which forbade any person, either man or woman, from making or buying any apparel, either woollen or silk or linen, with any lace on it, silver, gold, or thread, under the penalty of forfeiture of said clothes. Gold and silver girdles, hatbands, belts, ruffs, and beaver hats were prohibited by the same law; but the planters were permitted to wear out such apparel as they were already provided with, "except the immoderate great sleeves, slashed apparel, immoderate great rails and long wings." Five years later there was a new piece of legislation which banished "immoderate great breeches, knots of ryban,

broad shoulder bands and rayles, silk ruses, double ruffles and capes," and in 1651 the General Court, having found its legislation futile in many respects, descended to argument, and expressed its "utter detestation and dislike that men or women of meane condition, education, and callings shoulde take uppon them the garbe of gentlemen by the wearinge of gold or silver lace or buttons or poynts at their knees, to walke in great boots, or women of the same rank to weare silke or tiffany hoodes or scarfes." If those "of meane condition" did these things, it is evident that the people of higher class could not have been very sober in their garb—indeed we know that they were not. In 1676 the Court of Connecticut passed a law that is worthy of quotation in full, since it not only sets forth the Puritan opinion upon the matter, but shows the ingenuity of their efforts to cope with the growing evil, and also gives us a good idea of the fashions of that time:

"Whereas excess in apparel amongst us is unbecoming a wilderness condition and the profession of the gospell, whereby the riseing Generation is in danger to be corrupted, which practices are testifyed against in God's holy word, it is therefore ordered by this Court and authority thereof, that what person soever shall wear Gold or Silver Lace, or Gold or Silver Buttons, Silk Ribbons, or other costly superfluous trimings, or any bone Lace above three shillings p'r yard, or Silk Scarfes, the List makers of the respective Townes are hereby required to assesse such persons so offending, (or their Husbands, parents, or masters under whose government they are) in the list of Estates at one hundred and fifty pound Estate; and they to pay their Rates according to that proportion, as such men use to pay, to whom such apparell alowed as suitable to their Rank, provided this law shall not extend to any

magistrate, or a like publique officer of this Colony, their wives or children, whoe are left to their discretion in wearing of apparell, or any setled military commission officer, or such whose quality and Estate have been above the ordinary degree, though now decayed.

"It is further ordered that all such persons as shall for the future make, or weave, or buy any apparell exceeding the quality and condition of their persons and Estates, or that is apparently beyond the necessary end of apparell for covering or comeliness, either of these to be judged by the Grand Jury and County Court where such presentments are made, shall forfeit for every such offence ten shillings; and if any Taylor shall fashion any garment for any child or servant contrary to the mind of the Parent or Master of such a child or servant, he shall forfeit for every such offence ten shillings."

Think of the position of the Grand Jury and County Court which were to decide as to whether "apparell" went beyond the "necessary end for covering or comeliness!" Imagine the grave and reverend judges and the sapient jurymen putting their wise heads together over the question as to whether Mistress Anne's "wascote" was an inch too long for the mere needs of covering, or whether Mistress Jane's coif was decorated with lace beyond the absolute requirements of comeliness! The law doubtless meant well, but from its nature it was not capable of enforcement.

A fairly comprehensive understanding of the wardrobe of a lady of the mid-seventeenth century may be furnished by reproducing, in all the glory of its original orthography, the list of the clothes of Jane Humphrey, as given in her last will and testament. Mistress Humphrey died in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in 1668, and she seems to have

had no possessions beyond her wardrobe. This, however, was not uncommon at the time, when clothes had a value that came from their rarity of stuff and necessary skill in fashioning, so that such a list as that of the deceased lady represented a considerable amount in those days.

"Ye Jump. Best Red Kersey Petticoate. Sad Grey Kersey Wascote. My blemmish Searge Petticoate & my best hatt. My white Fustian Wascote. A black silk neck cloath. A handkerchiefe. A blew Apron. A plain black Quoife without any lace. A white Holland Appron with a small lace at the bottom. Red Searge petticoat and a blackish Searge petticoat. Greene Searge Wascote & my hoode & muffe. My Greene Linsey Woolsey petticoate. My Whittle that is fringed and my blew Short Coate. A handkerchief. A blew Apron. My best Quife with a lace. A black Stuffe Neck Cloath. A White Holland apron with two breadths in it. Six yards of Redd Cloth. A greene Vnder Coate. Staning Kersey Coate. My murry Wascote. My Cloake and my blew Wascote. My best White Apron, my best Shifts. One of my best Neck Cloathes, and one of my plain Quieus. One Calico Vnder Neck Cloath. My fine thick Neck Cloath. My next best Neck Cloath. A square Cloath with a little lace on it. My greene Apron."

It is not probable that many women of the present day, far less any man, will be able to recognize all the stuffs that are here represented; but we can easily gather that Mistress Humphrey was well provided in the matter of "apparell", and the fact that her wardrobe was deemed worthy to be so divided into small portions—for each period as printed represents a beneficiary, the name being omitted as of no interest to us—of itself proves the value that in those days attached to the smallest articles of clothing. Yet a gown could be made at a cost of but eight

shillings for the mantua-maker; the whole of the expense lay in the stuff, which was costly in proportion to its difficulty of attainment. Indian stuffs were very popular among the later colonists and in the days immediately after the Revolution. In the matter of general fashions at this time it may be best to quote from a work written by a woman concerning feminine costume in the older days of our country:

"We can gain some notion of the general shape of the dress of our forbears at various periods from the portraits of the times. Those of Madam Shrimpton and of Rebecca Rawson are among the earliest. They were painted during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. The dress is not very graceful, but far from plain, showing no trace of Puritanical simplicity; in fact, it is precisely that seen in portraits of English well-to-do folk of the same date. Both have strings of beads around the neck and no other jewels; both wear loosely tied and rather shapeless flat hoods concealing the hair, Madam Shrimpton's having an embroidered edge about two inches wide. Similar hoods are shown in Romain de Rooge prints of the landing of King William, of the women in the coronation procession. They were like the Nithesdale hoods of Hogarth's prints, but smaller. Both New England dames have also broad collars, stiff and ugly, with uncurved horizontal lower edge, apparently trimmed with embroidery or cut-work. Both show the wooden contour of figure which was either the fault of the artist or of the iron busk of the wearer's stays. The bodies are stiffly pointed, and the most noticeable feature of the gown is the sleeve, consisting of a double puff drawn in just above the elbow; in one case with very narrow ribbon loops. Randle Holme says that a sleeve thus tied in at the elbow was called a virago sleeve.

Madam Shrimpton's sleeve has also a falling frill of embroidery and lace and a ruffle around the armsize. The question of sleeves sorely vexed the colonial magistrates. Men and women were forbidden to have but one slash or opening in each sleeve. Then the inordinate width of sleeves became equally trying, and all were ordered to restrain themselves to sleeves half an ell wide. Worse modes were to come: 'short sleeves whereby the nakedness of the arm may be discovered' had to be prohibited; and if any such ill-fashioned gowns came over from London, the owners were enjoined to wear thick linen to cover the arms to the wrist. Existing portraits show how futile were these precautions, how inoperative these laws; arms were bared with impunity, with complacency, and the presentment of Governor Wentworth shows three slashes in the sleeves.

"Not only were the arms of New England women bared to an immodest degree, but their necks also, calling forth many a 'just and seasonable reprehension of naked breasts.' Though gowns thus cut in the pink of the English mode proved too scanty to suit Puritan ministers, the fair wearers wore them as long as they were in vogue.

"It is curious to note in the oldest gowns I have seen, that the method of cutting and shaping the waist or body is precisely the same as at the present day. The outlines of the shoulder and back-seams, of the bust forms, are the same, though not so gracefully curved: and the number of pieces is usually the same. Very good examples to study are the gorgeous brocaded gowns of Peter Faneuil's sister, perfectly preserved and now exhibited in the Boston Art Museum."

That the record made in this quotation may be complete, it must be supplemented by a few words devoted to

another aspect of fashion among the early Puritans. This was in the matter of hair-dressing, that fashion which went to such enormous lengths in England during the eighteenth century. A curious fact is that the Puritan women seem generally to have worn "bangs"; and this fact is more of a certificate to their simplicity than to their taste. However, there was a large leaven of fashion in the towns of the Puritans; for in 1683 Increase Mather thus spoke of the mode of his day: "Will not the haughty daughters of Zion refrain their pride in apparell? Will they lay out their hair, and wear their false locks, their borders, and towers like comets about their heads?" These queries suggest decided lengths in head adornment, probably even to the adoption of the "heart-breakers" worn in 1670, which are described as "False locks set on wyers to make them stand at a distance from the head." One would think that such frank admission of falsity might plead its own excuse; but one Puritan minister describes the women of that time as "Apes of Fancy, friziling and curyling of their hayr."

Enough of dress and fashion! Yet some record thereof is pertinent here, for it shows us the gradual change which was being worked in the customs and ideas of New England. The colonies were becoming conventional; when modishness comes in at the door, individuality flies out at the window. The ideal of the home was being modified, not to say altered. There had always been among a certain element a love for the gauds and fripperies of the world, but it was not until the opening of the second colonial period that this element grew to the ascendency in New England. The old primitive simplicity as a national attribute was beginning to fail, and in its stead was being imported the conventional complexity of life in the mother country. New England was becoming more deserving of

her name; she was growing to be a lesser England instead of a new civilization. She was fast falling into the errors that were undermining the true American spirit in the southern colonies.

We have seen the wardrobe of a New England woman, presumably one of fashion, yet not of notable rank. Here was a great change from the era when the majority of women wore homespun and furnished themselves with the material which they wore as well as fashioned the garments with their own hands. Of course there was still, and long continued to be, an element that preserved the household traditions of the earlier settlers, and thus the individuality of the life; but it had come to be in the minority. The New England woman, taken from the representative class, no longer whirled her spinning wheel and wove the garments for her wearing and that of her family; she looked to her goodman to import these things from England in the vessels which were now regularly arriving in the home ports.

Another sign of the changed conditions of the New England home was the matter of domestic service. In 1687, according to the writer of *The Diary of a French Refugee in Boston,* there was "absolute Need of Hired Help;" but it was less household servants than field hands to whom the author was referring. Later, however, we find Hugh Peters, of Salem, writing to an acquaintance in Boston, "Wee haue heard of a diuidence of women & children in the baye & would be glad of a share viz: a young woman or girle & a boy if you thinke goode." This points to domestic service, as does a later letter from the same source, in which he says, "My wife desires my daughter to send to Hanna that was her mayde now at Charlestowne to know if she would dwell with us, for truly wee are now so destutute (having now but an Indian) that wee

know not what to do." Later yet, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, we find in the journals frequent advertisements of runaway servants, mostly Indians. There was also negro slavery in the northern colonies, though it was never entirely accepted as an institution,—not from any moral scruples, but because of inexpediency and poverty. In 1645, Emanuel Downing suggested the exchange of Indian captives for negroes, and said, "I doe not see how wee can thrive untill wee gett a stock of slaves sufficient to doe all our business;" but this probably referred to field hands, though he later wrote to England for "godlye skylful paynestakeing girles" as servants, and in default of these he at last fairly inaugurated the system of slavery which existed for a time in New England. There were white slaves as well as black in the northern colonies, and this infamous custom helped to solve the problem of domestic service.

That there was trouble with servants in those old days, even as in these present, is amply attested by the records; but it was possible to resort to more drastic measures than are now feasible. We read that at Hartford, "Susan Coles for her rebellious cariedge towards her mistris is to be sent to the house of correction and be kept to hard labour and course dyet, to be brought forth the next Lecture Day to be publiquely corrected and so to be corrected weekly until Order be given to the contrary." This was in the early times, and many matrons of later days, even as many now, must have longed for the return of the laws which enabled them to keep their servants in order. Mary Dudley has set forth her experience in this matter in a letter to her mother, Madame Winthrop, whom she had asked to send her "a goode girle, a strong lusty servant, used to all kind of work who would refuse none." Her letter of complaint is worth quoting at large, as showing

the conditions of the New England housekeeper of that day in relation to her "help:"

"A great affliction I have met withal by my maide servant and now I am like through God his mercie to be freed from it; at her first coming to me she carried herselfe dutifully as became a servant; but since through mine and my husbands forbearance towards her for small faults, she hath got such a head and is growen so insolent that her carriage towards vs especialle myselfe is unsufferable. If I bid her doe a thinge she will bid me to doe it myselfe, and she sayes how she can give content as wel as any servant but shee will not, and sayes if I love not quietness I was never so fitted in my life for she would make mee have enough of it. If I should write to you of all the reviling speeches and filthie language she hath vsed towards me I should but grieve you."

There is more of it; but enough has been quoted to show the tone, which is strikingly prophetic of many things of the present day; even a piece of our reprehensible slang seems foreshadowed in that phrase, "she hath got such a head." In another letter, this time written by a man, John Winthrop, we hear that the "Irish creature" whom he and his wife have for servant is a very plague. She is "lying and unfaithfull; w'd doe things on purpose in contradiction and vexation to her mistress; lye out of the house anights and have contrivances w'th fellows that have been stealing from o'r estate and gett drink out of ye cellar for them; saucy and impudent. . . . She w'd frequently take her mistresses capps and stockins, hankerchers etc., to dress herselfe and away without leave among her companions." So that the servant question was just as difficult of solution among our great-great-grandmothers as for ourselves.

Yet from this very condition of servitude blossomed one of the purest flowers of romance that we find in the history of the early days of our country,—the story of Agnes Surriage. She was but a servant, a mere drudge, scrubbing the floor of the tavern at Marblehead, when her beauty attracted the attention of young Sir Harry Frankland, then collector of the port of Boston. Noting that she was barefooted, he gave her a crown to buy a pair of shoes; but on a subsequent visit he saw her again scrubbing and still shoeless. His question as to the disposition of his crown elicited the reply that she had bought the shoes but was keeping them "to wear to meeting;" and though there would seem to be no great wit herein, it is recorded that Frankland thought that "a reply had never been made with such charming grace." At all events, he incontinently fell heels over head in love; but his pride of family forbade marriage, and it would seem that at first his intentions toward the young girl were creditable enough, since he had her educated by the best masters in Boston, and especially instructed in religion by the Rev. Dr. Edward Holyoke, president of Harvard College. So matters went until Agnes was twenty-three; but then Frankland's passion would no longer be denied, though he had no intention of making the lowborn girl his wife. But she loved him with a love too great to balk at conventions; she felt herself his wife in heart, and she gave herself unreservedly to him. For a time they lived together in Boston; but scandal became too strong, and they went into the country, where they lived for about three years the ideal country life of that day,—a life much like that of the Virginia planter. Then they went on a visit to England; but the relatives of Frankland would have none of them, and they went to travel on the continent. After about a year of wandering they settled down at Lisbon, and

were there during the terrible earthquake that visited that city on All Saints' Day, 1755. During that catastrophe Frankland was in mortal peril; and in his moments of pain and danger he vowed that, if he were saved, he would make Agnes his wife in fact as she had so long been in heart. Scarcely had the vow been recorded before Agnes was at his side, having searched for him and come in time to aid in his rescue. He did not forget his oath when the danger was passed, and the next day married her according to the rites of the Church of Rome, the ceremony being repeated according to English customs while they were on their homeward voyage. Agnes, now Lady Frankland, was on this occasion well received in England; but the hearts of the lovers—for such they still were—inclined to Boston, the scene of their first loves, and they soon crossed the ocean and took up their residence in the Clarke Mansion on Garden Street in Boston. Here they lived until 1757, when Frankland was appointed consul-general at Lisbon; but in 1763 they once more returned to the city of their early love and lived there until 1768, when they went to England, where Frankland died. Lady Frankland then returned once more to her now desolate home, though she did not live in the Clarke Mansion, but in Hopkinton, where she dwelt until the Revolution, when she once more suffered exile, this time as a Tory. She went to England, and there she harmed the romance of her life by her marriage to John Drew, a rich banker; but she died within a year, at the age of fifty-eight, and one can only regret that death did not anticipate that unfaithfulness to the memory of her first lover. Even with its luckless anticlimax, there are few stories so romantic as that of the beautiful scrubbing-girl of Marblehead, and she may well be remembered as one of the most prominent figures of colonial womanhood.

Let us now return to matters more immediately connected with the earlier part of the period which we are considering; and among them there is none of more interest, even though it be hardly enduring, than the story of the epidemic of witchcraft at Salem.

It must be remembered that the witchcraft outbreak at Salem, though it was there most exaggerated, was yet typical. It was the day of superstition; and that superstition was both received and fostered mostly by women. The outbreak at Salem was in a way salutary, for its very violence brought about the reaction which soon culminated in the establishment of a truer creed and a different influence for women; but at the time it was in the actual direction of primitive development in America.

It began with the troubles between the parish of Salem and the lately-called minister, one Samuel Parris, into the nature of which troubles it is not necessary to enter. In 1689, Mr. Parris had come to Salem from the West Indies, and he had brought with him two colored servants. These people, John Indian and Tituba, his wife, were experts in palmistry, second-sight, magic, and incantations, and they soon infected a circle of the village children with love for these matters. The daughter and the niece of Mr. Parris, aged respectively nine and eleven, were among the most prominent at first; but they had older companions who soon began to make earnest that which in its inception was only intended as a play. The girls learned to go into trances, to talk gibberish, to creep about on all-fours, and generally to give a good imitation of the pythonesses of old. The chief of these young people were Mary Walcott and Elizabeth Hubbard, each aged seventeen; Elizabeth Booth and Susannah Sheldon, each aged eighteen; and Mary Warren and Sarah Churchill, each aged twenty. These, however, though the leaders in a way, did not

long retain the supremacy; for it was found that Ann Putnam, aged twelve, and Mercy Lewis, aged seventeen, were preëminent for mischief and ingenuity. Another leader in the mischief was Mrs. Ann Putnam, about thirty years of age and probably of unsound mind, though she was apparently not suspected of anything beyond vindictiveness and eccentricity. She was a beautiful and well-educated woman, admirably fitted for the part she was destined to play in the coming orgy of murder.

The antics of these girls, not improbably first carried out in a spirit of sport, were begun at the parsonage about Christmas, 1691; but after a time they were challenged for their actions, when they declared that they could not help themselves, being bewitched. Instead of disregarding their folly or attributing it to childish mischief and putting a stop to it by the strong hand, Mr. Parris published the matter to the world. The children now found themselves of a sudden objects of the most widespread scrutiny; they also found themselves, it is not absurd to suppose, in a position where they deemed themselves in peril if they were discovered to be impostors. They were soon acknowledged as truly suffering from witchcraft; and then began the inquisition as to the guilty parties. Tituba, the Indian hag, who had probably taught them the tricks which they now put into effect against her, was the first named by them as one of their tormentors; and then followed the names of Sarah Good and Sarah Osburn, two old women with few friends. Tituba confessed,—it is at least possible, because of the craze for notoriety often to be found in such people,—but the two white women denied their guilt, and all were sent to Boston for trial. The matter might now well have been allowed to die out; but the girls had tasted power and were anxious for more.

Tituba, in her confession, had implicated the two women, Good and Osburn, and "two others whose faces she could not see"; and the girls were importuned to name these other "tormentors." At first they refused,—probably because they had not held council to decide on the two to be named,—but at last they indicated two of the most estimable women in the community, Martha Corey and Rebecca Nurse, aged respectively sixty and (about) seventy years. The village was thunderstruck, for these women, if not of the highest rank, were full of courtesy and kindliness and were well-educated and well-bred. None the less, they were accused, Goodwife Corey by little Ann Putnam,—at whose instigation it seems unnecessary to suggest,—Goodwife Nurse, whose husband was one of the most honored persons in the village, while she herself was regarded as a model of virtue and piety, by more than one of "The Afflicted Children," as the girls were now called; but the bearing of Mistress Putnam at the examination was sufficient to show where stood the chief accuser. The girls went into their regular fits at each answer to the questions, unshamed by the sight of the venerable lady standing there in her dainty dress and with her fragile figure and pure face; and Mrs. Putnam broke in on the magistrate's questions with "Did you not bring the black man with you? Did you not bid me tempt God and die? How oft have you eaten and drunk your own damnation?" It is no wonder that the accused, at such a horrible outburst of vindictive hate,—as she must have known it to be,—raised her hands to heaven with the cry, "O Lord, help me!" But at that the "Afflicted Children" went into the most extraordinary convulsions; and the foolish magistrate, Hathorne by name, who had until then been favorably inclined toward the prisoner, connected the spasms of the girls with the

uplifted hands of the old lady, and this turned the tide against her. She was remanded for trial.

The mischief was now fairly afoot. Personal malice began to work; some of the girls were servants and accused their masters and mistresses, as in the cases of John Proctor and George Jacobs. On the other hand, now that superstition was thoroughly awakened, it ran its usual course of madness, and the most absurd pretexts for accusations were eagerly fastened upon. Susannah Martin, for instance, was accused, and executed, upon the ground that she had walked on a country road without getting her skirts or stockings muddy, and must be a witch to be able to perform such a feat! Even such a man as the Rev. George Burroughs, who had been pastor of the church at Salem for about three years, but had long left there, and in 1692 was living in Maine, was arrested on a charge of witchcraft and taken to Salem to be tried, on the plea that he was, though of small stature, strong enough to lift a barrel of cider or hold a heavy musket out at arm's length. He was named by the "Afflicted Children"; but the fact that while in Salem he had been inimical to the party of Mrs. Ann Putnam makes the real source of the accusation not problematical. He was formally accused by little Ann Putnam, who said that one evening there came to her the apparition of a minister and asked her to write her name in the devil's book; then appeared two women in shrouds, who scolded the first wraith away; then the two women told Ann that they were the ghosts of the first and second wives of Mr. Burroughs, who had murdered them, and one of them showed to the child the gaping wound which had been inflicted upon her. On such testimony as this Mr. Burroughs, a man of high standing and deep learning, was condemned to die.

Nor was this an isolated case; on the contrary, it was the rule. So numerous grew the accusations that Sir William Phips, the first royal governor, appointed a special court to try cases of witchcraft, and nineteen in all suffered death upon such accusations as have been instanced. At last the girls made the mistake—whether or not instigated by Mrs. Putnam in these instances does not appear—of accusing persons who could not possibly be suspected of such practices, even allowing the possibility of the practices themselves. When they brought charges against the Rev. Samuel Willard, one of the most eminent divines of Boston, and Lady Phips, the wife of the governor, they were sharply rebuked; and when they added to their list the name of Mistress Hale, wife of the minister in Beverly and famous throughout the colony for her saintly character, they ranged against them the best of all the people of the country. Mr. Hale himself had been a believer in the accusations; but now, when their falsity was thus proved to him, he changed his allegiance and declared war against the perpetrators of the real crimes, as he now saw those accusations to be. This was practically the end of the insanity, and the death blow to the panic was given when some people of Andover, on being accused, brought action for defamation of character and thus removed the matter to its true tribunal. There were no more accusations after that.

Some fourteen years afterward, one of the "Afflicted Children," Ann Putnam,—who had been the most active of all,—made public confession in the Salem church that she had been a cause of the shedding of innocent blood. She declared, however, that she had not acted "out of anger, malice, or ill-will to any person, for I had no such thing against one of them, but what I did was ignorantly, being deluded of Satan." This latter declaration has been

generally interpreted to mean that Ann was even then, at the age of twenty-five, convinced that she had had actual communion with the powers of darkness—in other words, that she was a self-deceived seer of visions. The theory is open to doubt. Ann's words are at least susceptible of another interpretation; and, whether they were intended to bear this meaning or not, it may well be that she was "deluded of Satan" under the form of Mistress Ann Putnam, her mother. The complicity of Mr. Parris, the minister, is probable; but there is little doubt that the moving spirit of the conspiracy, after this had gained strength and purpose, was Mistress Ann Putnam. She was a brilliant woman in many ways, a fact which is not at all incompatible with the further fact that she was a moral degenerate, or at least a monomaniac. It is most probable that she directed the whole progress of the conspiracy, which at first arose in opportunity by the accident of the teaching of the old Indian woman and its effect upon some hysterical girls, who saw before them a chance to become notorious, and that she worked it throughout to her own ends, persuading the girls that, having once embarked upon such an enterprise, their sole safety consisted in playing the game to its finish. Possibly she also was to some extent self-deceived; she was a descendant of the Carrs of Salisbury, who were noted as being very nervous and excitable, and she was herself of the most irritable and sanguine temperament. But it seems little probable that she was a victim rather than a ruler in the insanity which came of her fostering, for not only were her daughter and servant the most prominent members of the "Afflicted Children," but it was her personal enemies who first disappeared into the shadows of death, and it was her hand which guided the accusation that smote every victim, until the reign of terror grew beyond even

her control. She stands as the female Robespierre of America, slaying for lust of power and afterward for fear of losing her own head; and she remains one of the most picturesque and yet gruesome figures that our history has produced.

We shall leave this ominous figure standing on the threshold of New England as we turn southward to inquire as to the conditions existent in the other great colony of English America; but on our way it is worth while to take a passing glimpse at New York. This city had emerged from New Amsterdam; the old vrouws, with their feather beds and their multiplicity of petticoats and their scrupulously clean houses and their floors with patterns traced in sand, had passed away. They had been most picturesque in their way, though they left no enduring effect upon the type which we now know.

Of the lives of the old burghers and their wives and families, their characteristics and their customs, we have a most animated account in the words of the master-writer, Washington Irving. Fine old fellows were these burghers; and companionable and merry were their wives and daughters. What a group is offered in the polite, yet firm Peter Minuit; the pleasure-loving, but vacillating and not too scrupulous Wouter Van Twiller, in frequent tilt with the irascible but honest Dominie Bogardus; the honest, but ill-adapted Wilhelm Kieft; the grand old Peter Stuyvesant, despotic, yet paternal in his rule, stubborn, but brave. Of another kind, and in a lighter vein, we have a picture of the genial and universal favorite, Antony Van Corlear, of whom Irving writes:

"It was a moving sight to see the buxom lasses, how they hung about the doughty Antony Van Corlear—for he was a jolly, rosy-faced, lusty bachelor, fond of his joke, and withal a desperate rogue among women. Fain would

they have kept him to comfort them while the army was away; for besides what I have said of him, it is no more than justice to add, that he was a kind-hearted soul, noted for his benevolent attentions in comforting disconsolate wives during the absence of their husbands—and this made him to be very much regarded by the honest burghers of the city."

The vrouws were comfortable persons, not given to vivacity, yet in their way individual, and that sometimes in a manner not altogether commendable. We are told in the court records of Brooklyn that two ladies, Mistress Jonica Schampf and Widow Rachel Luguer by name, actually assaulted one Peter Praa, captain of militia, when he was proudly leading his troops on training day, and so dealt with him in "ivill inormities"—which included beating, hair-pulling, and other like amenities—that his life was for a time thought to be forfeit. In the matter of legal quarrels, too, there was vigor as well as characteristic type among the vrouws; we are told that Dominie Bogardus and Anneke, his wife, sued a female neighbor because the latter had said that the chaste Anneke, in crossing a muddy street, had lifted her petticoats higher than was necessitated by the mud or was consistent with modesty.

The love of gossip among the burghers' ladies was a characteristic that gave rise to a number of suits for slander. On the other hand, the vrouws often engaged in trade, and so set the example for the business woman of to-day, and in such matters their energy and perseverance were commendable. We are told of these good vrouws that they were up with the crow of the cock, took their first meal at dawn, and ate their dinner at the stroke of noon. Then, says our chronicler, "the worthy Dutch matrons would array themselves in their best linsey jackets and petticoats, and, putting a half-finished stocking into the

capacious pocket which hung from the girdle, with scissors, pin-cushion, and keys outside their dress, sally forth to a neighbor's house to spend the afternoon. Here they plied their knitting needles and their tongues at the same time, discussed the village gossip, settled their neighbors' affairs to their own satisfaction, and finished their stockings in time for tea, which was on the table at six o'clock. This was the occasion for the display of the family plate and the cups of rare old china, out of which the guests sipped the fragrant bohea, sweetening it by an occasional bite from the huge lump of loaf sugar which was laid invariably by the side of each plate, while they discussed the hostess's apple-pies, doughnuts, and waffles. Tea over, the party donned their cloaks and hoods, for bonnets were not, and set out for home to be in time to superintend the milking and look after their household affairs before bed-time," which came at nine o'clock to the minute.

The dress of these ladies "consisted of a jacket of cloth or silk and a number of short petticoats of every stuff and color, quilted in fanciful figures. If the pride of the Dutch matrons lay in their beds and linen, that of the Dutch maidens lay equally in their elaborately wrought petticoats, which were their own handiwork and often constituted their only dowry. They wore blue, red, and green worsted stockings of their own knitting, with particolored clocks, together with high-heeled leather shoes. Considerable jewelry was in use among them in the shape of rings and brooches, and girdle-chains of gold and silver were much affected by fashionable belles. These were attached to the richly bound Bibles and hymn-books and suspended from the belt outside the dress, thus forming an ostentatious Sunday decoration. For necklaces they wore numerous strings of gold beads; and the poorer classes, in humble imitation, encircled their throats with

steel and glass beads and strings of Job's tears, the fruit of a plant thought to possess some medicinal virtues."

This was their holiday costume. Their dress for work and wear was "of good substantial homespun. Every household had from two to six spinning-wheels for wool and flax, whereon the women of the family expended every leisure moment. Looms, too, were in common use, and piles of homespun cloth and snow-white linen attested to the industry of the active Dutch maidens. Hoards of home-made stuffs were thus accumulated in the settlement, sufficient to last till a distant generation."

Stolid as we think these old Dutch people, they had their amusements, in which their women participated with much zest. There were "bees" of all kinds,—quilting-bees, husking-bees, apple-bees, and raising-bees; but above all they loved dancing; and, though we may think of them as heavy-footed, it is probable that many of these demure Dutch maidens would "trip it on the light fantastic toe" with as good a grace as their less sedate sisters of the South.

Before leaving the north, one somewhat curious female figure of New York is especially worth noting, as having been associated with one of the most picturesque and sorely maligned characters in our history,—Sarah Bradley, daughter of Captain Thomas Bradley, and herself an Englishwoman by birth. In 1685, she married one William Cox, a man of singular character, whose mother was termed "Alice Cox, alias Bono," for what reason does not appear. Sarah Cox, with whom we are more immediately concerned, was at the time of her marriage a dashing young woman, of handsome face and fine figure, but so illiterate that she could not write her own name, as is attested by the fact that sundry documents bearing her authorization give her mark instead of the usual signature.

In later years, however, she seems to have attained sufficient knowledge to sign her name. In 1689, Mr. Cox met with an accident, thus described in a letter of the period: "Mr. Cox, to show his fine cloaths, undertooke to goe to Amboy to proclaime the King, who coming whome againe, was fairely drowned, which accident startled our commanders here very much; there is a good rich widdow left."

John Tuder, who wrote the letter and had no love for Cox, is rather flippant in his treatment of the fatal occurrence; but it seems that "the good rich widdow" was herself hardly inconsolable, for in a very short time she married again, this time one John Oort, who in his turn soon disappeared from the scene, leaving Sarah a double widow and also doubly rich. She was hardly to be more successful in her third marriage than the others, nor did she show much sensibility in the matter; for on the 15th of May, 1691, she took out letters of administration on the estate of her late husband, and on the 16th of May a license was issued for the marriage of the fair Sarah to Captain William Kidd. Familiar to all is the fate of that redoubtable pirate, as he is generally held to have been,—though pirate he certainly was not,—and it is not convenient here to enter upon details; but there seems to be little doubt that Mistress Kidd exerted a curious, and, as it turned out, fatal influence upon the fortunes of her third husband. It is averred, though it is hardly a matter of history, that her relations with the Earl of Bellamont, Governor of New York, furnished the reason for the choice of her husband as the commander of the expedition which resulted in the accusation of piracy for which he suffered, and that it was her restless ambition which induced him to accept a post which was little to his liking. Be all this as it may, Kidd was hanged; and his widow,

after this time prolonging her period of mourning to the unconscionable (for her) time of two years, married Christopher Rousby and settled down to a life free from further matrimonial adventures. She lived to a great age, but never lost her vivacity and assertiveness, and she merits a place in our record for her influence upon the romantic career of the famous—long infamous—Captain Kidd.

Now, passing by the growing towns of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Annapolis, and the fading one of Saint Mary's, let us seek the Old Dominion and learn the conditions which there obtained in the days prior to the coming of the Revolution. The influx of Cavaliers during the later portion of the seventeenth century had had its effect upon Virginia society, already prone to graft the lighter of English manners and customs upon those proper to the colonial conditions. In Virginia the women were free, untrammelled by public sentiment, to indulge their taste for gay apparel, to trick themselves off with all the gauds and gewgaws that fashion could invent. The towering heads of hair which were such an offence in the eyes of our Puritan forefathers were tolerated, if not admired, by our grandsires of Virginia; the brocade skirt, the exposed bosom, the embroidered jupe, straight corset, and gay farthingale were entirely congenial to the theories of the Virginia colonists, men as well as women. The gaiety in dress was answered by gaiety of life. With a rapidity that seemed strange in the face of the preference for the life of the country, the towns had become more populous and accessible; and they served as *foci* for the social functions and life. Yet, even though there was such rout and revel at Williamsburg and kindred towns, it was in the houses of the great planters that one saw the true Virginia social existence, that one found the Virginia woman of the time in her truest apparition. Under the influences of

the coming of the Cavaliers and the Huguenots—for the descendants of the latter perpetuated the restless gaiety of their forsaken land rather than the austerities of the faith which had been the cause of their exile—there had arisen in Virginia something of a cult of the social function. The court of Sir William Berkeley had been a miniature reproduction of that of his king, and though some of the traditions of his time passed away with the old governor, the main spirit survived in the ideals of Virginia society. As in all such cases there must be, there was a certain amount of discernible hollowness; but, as a rule, there were to be found in the best and most typical houses of Virginia the graces of the society of the Restoration without its vices, its courtesy without its affectations. An aristocracy was growing where none had been before, or at least where there had been but a feeble and ineffectual leaven of one. At this period, the woman of Virginia was the typical and representative lady of English America.

Moreover, there was now entering into Virginia conditions a sort of feudality, less in theory than in fact. There was much to recall the life of the old feudal baron. There was the same dependence upon the household for the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life; in the families of the great planters, such as Colonel Byrd of Westover, —whose daughter, Evelyn Byrd, was the pearl of Virginia ladies in her day, but died of a broken heart before she had grown past her first maturity,—there was manufacture of the raw materials into the finished product, under the eye of the mistress of the house. Slavery had by this time become an established feature of Virginia society, and it was at its best in results. The slaves answered in conditions to the feudal servitors; they were retainers in a way, and they were also the workmen of the home. They made shoes and rough clothing, and they performed all the

household tasks which were not strictly within the province of the chatelaine. The field hands raised tobacco; and it was with this commodity that the planter bought the silks and laces which clothed his wife and daughters when they appeared *en grande tenue*. But, though thus the lady of the manor had her duties in the training of her household servants, in the supervision of the household tasks, and in the provision of certain cates and other dainties which were to be made by no hands but hers, her general duty, that which occupied more of her time and thought than any other, was to be effective and satisfactory as a hostess.

It was thus in the southern colonies, with their greater wealth in servants and money and their consequently greater refinement, that there first appeared the type of American woman as she was a little later to be known throughout the land; but the coming of refinement and its accompaniment, modishness, was not long confined to the Virginias. Before the ending of the later colonial period and the beginnings of the days of the Revolution, there were to be found refinement and modishness in Massachusetts as in Virginia; but it was long before an equal amount of luxury was there displayed. In the North the same distinction of station was maintained between the "governor's lady" and the plebeian housewife that existed in the South between the lady of the plantation and her humbler sister of the hut; but there were fewer spouses of governors and their social equals in the North than there were wives of planters in the South, and so the developing type of American lady began in Virginia and spread thence rather than adopted from without. But everywhere, in all sections of the country—save indeed the undeveloped outskirts, where the wilderness was being forced back and concerning which we shall busy ourselves later, when the type of the

pioneer was more distinctive—there was up-springing a different type from that of the settlers or the early colonists. The American woman was ceasing to be the co-worker with her husband in matters of the hands and was gradually taking her rightful place as the director rather than the laborer. She was still the housewife; but her sphere was becoming enlarged and her ideas different. The wilderness had been pushed back from her door; she was as much a dweller in towns, even if they were not of very great dimensions or importance, as were her sisters across the great water. Her husband no longer wrestled with a hostile earth for a bare sustenance, but owned his houses and his lands and held himself among the prosperous ones of the world, so that his wife and his daughters were free from need of personal labor. Not that they were idle, these ladies who had blossomed from the earlier stem; we shall see that many of them were notable housewives, real helpmeets to their husbands; but they worked in a different manner from that of their grandmothers. And they differed from those excellent dames in many things, but above all in their respect for that impalpable but dominant thing called Fashion; and so they began to lose their individuality and take on the bearing and ways of the cosmopolitan type of women.

As a consequence of the introduction of luxury as a recognized condition of the American household of wealth and refinement, there came about a gradual change in the type of the sections which resulted in a levelling of the type of the whole land and its adaptation to European standards. That subtle influence of fashion permeated the land from north to south—there was then no east or west—and brought all the severed types under one strait rule. No longer could the dame of the Puritans be distinguished by outer guise or even by her customs and manners from

her of the Cavaliers, while the intermediate woman, she of the settlement erstwhile known as Manhattan, on her part came forward with the rest to the goal of identity. There were more women of fashion in Virginia and Maryland than in Massachusetts or Connecticut; but the type was the same, and a man might travel from Williamsburg to Boston, stopping on his way at Annapolis, Philadelphia, and New York, and find no considerable difference between the woman who sped him at the outset and the woman who greeted him at the end of his journey,—at least as far as the eye and ear could note. From Madame Berkeley to Madame Phips was no step at all. The gracious dame of the period, stately in silks and satins and brocade, was as easy to find at one end of the country as at the other; the "toasts" were just as lovely, if not quite so plentiful, in Boston as in Williamsburg. But all this gain, as is the inevitable law, was at the expense of compensating loss. Refinement and elegance had come to be the inheritance of the American woman, but at the cost and loss of individuality. There had come into existence a type which was neither Puritan nor Cavalier nor Dutch, but American; though a universal type, it was not a distinctive one, as had been the others. The word "American" had come to have a meaning of universality as applied to the women of this country, and was yet to have a more inclusive signification; but the passing of marked sectional differences had also brought with it the doing away as well with that subtle thing which we term individuality. As distinguished from her sisters of that country which was still termed "mother," though so soon to be encountered in bitter hatred, the American woman had lost definition and personality.

We have now come to the period in our story when there will be no longer distinction between the woman of

the North and her sister in the South in the things which have thus far kept them apart in type. They will always preserve certain racial, climatic, and inherited traits peculiar to their respective sections; but they will be none the less in mass the women of America. Even when we shall be forced to record the great dissension which separated our country into two nations and accentuated all the sectional traits of its womankind as of its men there will be but different expressions of womanhood to record, not different types,—different conditions of existence, having effect of direction, not differing spirits and impulses. It was in the days before the darkening of the shadow of the Revolution that the American woman, untrammelled by conditions of residence or descent, began to appear as a type. She was very admirable, but she was no longer unique.

Chapter VII

Revolutionary Days

VII

REVOLUTIONARY DAYS

THOUGH the present chapter in its title purports to tell of the days of the war for independence, in reality this is but an arbitrary heading, for we shall approach those days from the distance of a quarter of a century. Not that there were at the beginning of this period any distinct limits of demarcation from the days immediately preceding it: the contrary was the case. But it is needful for the chronicler that he have some point of departure in each of his progressive steps toward the goal of to-day. The opening period of this chapter, therefore, is about the year 1750. There are reasons for this, apart from the arbitrary whim of the historian. Though not exactly in the year dividing the century, yet about that time there began to be manifested a spirit of American nationality such as had never before been shown. For the first time the country began to appear to itself in the aspect of something more than an aggregation of colonies, and to examine itself whether it were not in truth a nation. From the Canadas to the Carolinas there began to be a feeling of cohesion, a tardy and half-awake recognition of unity of interests and race. There had come about a much-fractured and thinly stretched chain of communication and continuity from north to south, and this was having the effect of binding together the scattered settlements in a feeling of union,

which was in a way effectual in the shaping of the history of women in America.

There were still—there ever must be—differences of manners and customs and even of thought imposed by the geographical dwellings of the women of the various sections; but there was withal a certain continuity and persistence of type, and this was gathering strength to survive the coming days of storm. During years of stress, in the face of treason to itself at the hands of its own daughters as well as of foreign foes, it did so survive and became the American woman of the early days of the republic; but there was much of vicissitude to be borne first—vicissitude not always recognized by the chroniclers of those days, for it was rather of manner than of contest. It was the old question of the survival of the fittest, with European complexity and American simplicity contending for the prize; and the battle, though won for the best, was not without compromise.

Before, however, fastening our gaze upon those yet distant days, let us look at the woman of America as she appeared in the period preceding that of storm. We have spoken of American simplicity, and, with all the coming of luxury during the later years of the southern colonies, this was still an attribute of the American woman; but it hardly applied to her dress or outer guise in any respect. In the very year, 1750, with which we have begun our steps into the period of the Revolution, we find in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* an advertisement that is of present interest to us as suggestive of the style of dress affected by the household of one of the most typical Americans of his day:

"Whereas on Saturday night last the house of Benjamin Franklin of this city, Printer, was broken open, and the following things feloniously taken away, viz, a double

necklace of gold beads, a womans long scarlet cloak almost new, with a double cape, a womans gown, of printed cotton of the sort called brocade print, very remarkable, the ground dark, with large red roses, and other large and yellow flowers, with blue in some of the flowers, with many green leaves; a pair of womens stays covered with white tabby before, and dove colour'd tabby behind, with two large steel hooks, and sundry other goods, etc."

It is evident that the family of Benjamin Franklin himself were somewhat addicted to gauds and fripperies. About this same date, George Washington is found writing to England for certain articles of dress for his stepdaughter, Miss Custis, then but four years of age; and for this miniature bit of humanity he orders such things as packthread stays, stiff coats of silk, masks for her face, caps, bonnets, ruffles, necklaces, fans, silk and calamanco shoes, and leather pumps, while for her small hands were ordered eight pairs of kid mitts and four pairs of gloves. We are told on excellent authority that at this time the "Southern dames, especially of Annapolis, Baltimore, and Charleston, were said to have the richest brocades and damasks that could be bought in London." Small simplicity here; and the goodwives of New York and New England were learning to follow their leaders in the fashions.

Yet in manners there was in the North still a leaven of the old Puritan sternness. The Rev. Mr. Burnaby, who published a book called *Travels in America in 1759,* records therein that when the captain of a British man-of-war, who had left his wife at Boston while he was on a cruise, was met by his spouse on his return, he very naturally kissed her in the sight of all men, the meeting taking place on the public wharf. But this act was against the statute which forbade kissing on the street as a great

indecency, and the reprobate captain was promptly haled before the magistrates. It will hardly be believed that these gentlemen actually sentenced the Englishman to be whipped and had the sentence executed; and though to be whipped was not then considered a greater disgrace than now to incur a fine, it is nevertheless pleasant to a modern to read that the captain, when later he had become most popular in Boston, invited his judges to a dinner on board his ship and there had them triced up to the rigging and to each meted out the Scriptural forty stripes save one. But the incident shows us the moral atmosphere of New England—at least in some of its parts; for it is unfortunately undeniable that in Connecticut the abominable practice of "bundling" was at the height of prevalence and popularity about 1750. The inevitable reaction came a little later however, and the fulminations of Jonathan Edwards and his fellows at last came to have their effect; and by the end of the Revolution the custom was no longer recognized by any respectable community, with one or two marked exceptions, and these exceptions ceased to be such before the coming of the new century. Yet as late as 1775 we find the diary of Abigail Foote—from which we shall later make a more edifying extract—recording as a matter of course the fact of Ellen Foote, sister to the writer, bundling with a young man "till sun about 3 hours high." It is pleasant to read that a few weeks later the pair were "cried" and married.

Such were the curious contradictions of customs and morals found among our Puritan forefathers: a man might not kiss his wife in the street, but an unmarried woman might, if clothed, spend the night in bed with her lover. There were many other contradictions of manners. For instance, what could be more suggestive of utter simplicity than the diary of Abigail Foote, to which reference has

just been made? I will quote an extract from it as an example of the life spent by young girls of her time. Abigail wrote in 1775, and she lived in Colchester, Connecticut. Here is a record of one of her days:

"Fix'd Gown for Prude Just to clear my teeth,—Mend Mother's Riding-hood,—Ague in my face,—Ellen was spark'd last night,—Mother spun short thread,—Fix'd two Gowns for Welch's girls,—Carded tow—spun linen —worked on Cheese Basket,—Hatchel'd Flax with Hannah and we did 51 lb a piece,—Pleated and ironed,—Read a sermon of Dodridge's,—Spooled a piece—milked the cows—spun linen and did 50 knots—made a broom of Guinea wheat straw,—Spun thread to whiten,—Went to Mr. Otis's and made them a swinging visit,—Israel said I might ride his jade,—Set a red Dye,—Prude stayed at home and learned Eve's Dream by heart,—Had two scholars from Mrs. Taylor's—I carded two pounds of whole wool and felt Nationly,—Spun harness twine,— Scoured the Pewter."

The information concerning Ellen is to us more suggestive than interesting, and why to card two pounds of wool should make anyone feel "Nationly" is not clear; but we can gather from the candid diary of young Mistress Foote a fair idea of the life of the young lady of that day. Varying with section in customs and application, it was yet typical in its way and speaks volumes of the simple and admirable training of the women of the period. But, being on the search for contradictions at this time, look upon this picture of the elaborate headdresses worn at that period, found in a letter from Anna Green Winslow:

"I had my heddus roll on. Aunt Storer said it ought to be made less, Aunt Deming said it ought not to be made at

all. It makes my head ach and burn and itch like anything Mama. This famous Roll is not made wholly of a Red-Cow Tail but is a mixture of that & horsehair very coarse & and a little human hair of a yellow hue that I suppose was taken out of the back part of an old wig. But D. made it, all carded together and twisted up. When it first came home, Aunt put it on, and my new cap upon it; she then took up her apron and measured me & from the roots of my hair on my forehead to the top of my notions I measured above an inch longer than I did downward from the roots of my hair to the end of my chin. Nothing renders a young person more amiable than Virtue and Modesty without the help of fals hair, Red-Cow Tail or D. the barber."

In this letter, written in 1771, Mistress Winslow treats the matter jocularly and even wittily; but it was a grave enough affair, that of the "heddus," to the average dame of the day. We are told that "the front hair was pulled up over a stuffed cushion or roll, and mixed with powder and grease; the back hair was strained up in loops or short curls, surrounded and surmounted with ribbons, pompons, aigrettes, jewels, gauze, and flowers and feathers, till the structure was half a yard in height." Fashion in this wise had gone to even greater extremes in other lands; but there was not much of colonial simplicity about this sort of thing. We are not told directly whether Abigail Foote, the spinner and carder, wore such a monstrosity as that described when she went to pay her "swinging visit" to the Otis family; but even if she personally avoided such extremes, yet these flagrant contradictions were in constant evidence in the life and garb of the New England woman of that day, nor were her more southern sisters far behind her in their disregard of consistency, even though

they manifested it in variant ways. In good and evil projections, all these things have survived and combined in the American woman of the present, though not in their old aspects.

It was about the beginning of the named period that there happened in Virginia a charming incident in which is displayed a feminine trait worthy of chronicle, even if universal in nationality. At the famous college of William and Mary there lived a bachelor professor by the name of John Camm. He had reached the period of life that we euphemistically call "middle age" when there came the end of his bachelorhood in this wise: Among those who listened to his exhortations—for he was preacher as well as professor—was Miss Betsy Hansford, of the family of the Hansford of "Bacon's Rebellion," known as rebel or martyr according to the sympathies of the speaker. She was a pretty maiden, and she was besieged with offers from the youth of the neighborhood, among others, from one who, having himself unsuccessfully pleaded his suit, bethought him of obtaining the services of the gifted divine as intermediary. The latter was willing to undertake the somewhat delicate part assigned to him, and he proceeded to show to the obdurate maiden that matrimony was a holy and much-to-be-desired state, fortifying his position with citations from the Bible. When it came to the quotation of texts, however, Miss Betsy proved herself an adept by telling Mr. Camm that her reason for refusing her young suitor might be discovered by an examination of II. Samuel, xii, 7. Home fared Mr. Camm in search of a Bible, for the young lady refused to lend him one, and there he found that the text read: "And Nathan said unto David, Thou art the man." Stronger hint could hardly be given and was not needed; for the Rev. John Camm and Betsy Hansford, spinster, were shortly afterward married.

The Virginia Betsy thus fairly rivalled the Puritan Priscilla, and perhaps surpassed her in the delicacy of her hint.

But darker days were coming, when there was to be but little thought of marrying and giving in marriage; and already the shadow of those days was felt by womanhood throughout our land. If the women did not as yet feel the actual presence of the storm, they saw their husbands and brothers and fathers go heavily for the fear of the days to come, and they saw the land becoming divided into two hostile camps. The time was fast nearing when the women of the country would be called upon to show that they knew as well as any man of them all the meaning of patriotism, when they would become the very nerves, as the men were the sinews, of the land in its distress. Darker grew the days and more serious became the bearing of the women as well as the men. Nor would the former be excluded from the counsels of their country; though they might not take place in the public meetings, they inspired the thoughts of the men who there poured forth a flood of patriotism that could not be stayed. It was the gaze of his wife, as she sat in an agony of suspense among the audience, that roused Patrick Henry to the splendid effort that lost the "Parsons" their case and gave him that fame which culminated in the House of Burgesses when there was question between patriotism and prudence; and doubtless it was the home council that sent him forth to do his duty that day and kindle the fire that was to sweep over the land until British misrule had been "burnt and purged away." That is speculation, not history; but we know by record the spirit of the women when there came the days of proof.

Before, however, embarking upon the subject of the women of the Revolution proper, there may be described personalities of two remarkable women who flourished

during the period which is being considered, but whose lives were spent in the conflict of religious discussion and not that of arms. For some reason,—possibly because of national liberty of opinions and speech,—America has always been preëminently the nursery of the female religious fanatic. The eighteenth century, in its latter half, gave to the world two remarkable examples of the female apostle; and though but few vital memories of either survive, yet these women are worthy of place in this record for their singular, though limited and temporary, influence, and for the resemblance in certain ways, at least of one of them, to one of the most prominent feminine leaders in our own day.

About 1770, the influence and power of a woman named Anne Lee became acknowledged among a strange community, the Shakers. We are told that through her at this time "the present testimony of salvation and eternal life was fully opened, according to the special gift and revelation of God,"—words that are not unfamiliar to us of the present day in application to another woman,—and that she was received by the Society as their "spiritual Mother." Later we find that from "the light and power of God which attended her ministry, she was received and acknowledged as the first *Mother* or spiritual parent, in the line female; and the second heir in the Covenant of Life, according to the present display of the Gospel." Even to this day, she is called by her few remaining followers "The Mother;" but she herself always claimed a yet higher and, to sober thought, blasphemous title, saying of herself on many occasions, "I am Anne, *the Word*." She was not an American by birth, but came to this country in 1774, attended by a few followers who believed in her pretensions,—her husband, Abraham Stanley, being among them,—and on our shore attained fame and following.

On the voyage, the ship—as we are told with much gravity, though the tale is hardly original—sprang a leak and was in grave peril of sinking; but the "Mother" put her own hands to the pumps, and under her supernatural force the water was soon ejected. Anne remained in New York about two years and then went to Nisqueuna; where she spent the remainder of her life amid her worshippers, save that, in 1781, she made a progress through several parts of the country, particularly New England, and was received with scorn by some and worship by others. She died at Nisqueuna in 1784, having in her brief residence in our country attained a notoriety which remained, in its way, unequalled for more than a century. The estimate in which she was held may best be judged from the concluding stanza of a "poem," written by one of her enthusiastic followers:

> "How much they are mistaken who think that Mother's dead,
> When through her ministrations so many souls are fed!
> In union with the Father, she is the second Eve,
> Dispensing full salvation to all who do believe."

Thus, in almost all ways,—in her title, in her assumption of a nature, but little, if at all, lower than that of the Deity, and in the devotion with which she inspired her followers,—Anne Lee was the prototype of the most notable woman of our day in America. But Anne Lee is now, a brief century after her death, held in memory only by a few uninfluential and rapidly lessening people; and in this also she may prove the true prototype.

The second and less noted of the two women religious leaders who will find record in this chapter was Jemima Wilkinson, who was born in Rhode Island in 1753, thus being a native American. When she was about twenty-three years old she was taken seriously ill, and during the

illness suffered from suspended animation. Of this circumstance she took advantage by giving out that she had been dead, and that during her absence from the world she had been invested with divine attributes and authority to instruct mankind in religion. By virtue of her delegated powers she professed to be able to foretell the future, to discern the secrets of the heart, and to have the power to cure any disease; and, as is generally the case with such impostors, failure to heal was accounted for by want of faith in the uncured individual. All these pretensions have a familiar sound, and the present century cannot boast a great—or at least universal—advance in such matters beyond its predecessors; but Jemima made a dangerous innovation, not adopted by her rivals ancient and modern, when she professed to be able to work miracles and offered to demonstrate her powers in this respect by walking upon water. A frame was constructed on the banks of Seneca Lake, and a crowd assembled to see the test; but the matter ended in absurdity, for the prophetess, on driving up in an elegant carriage, descended to the shore and entered the lake to the depth of her ankles; then, turning to the assembled people, she inquired if they had faith that she could accomplish the miracle, since without that faith she could do nothing of herself. She received unanimous answer in the affirmative; whereupon, rather logically than effectively, she replied that in that case there was no need for her to perform the miracle, and incontinently returned to her carriage and drove away! This was ingenious, but hardly convincing, one would think; yet Jemima lost little, if any, of her prestige by this fiasco. She was called by her followers "The Universal Friend,"—perhaps with double meaning, since she was educated by the Friends, and in some ways professed the tenets of their sect,—and in 1790 led a small

but enthusiastic band of worshippers to a tract in western New York, near Penn Yan, where, at a place called Jerusalem, the inspired prophetess and thaumaturgist died in 1819. As late as 1850 some of her credulous followers still existed, but they are now practically extinct.

Though neither of these women exercised any formative effect upon the American woman of the present, they were typical of a certain class of perverted femininity, and remarkable in their resemblance to later idols of their kind, and are thus worthy of chronicle. They are well cleared from our way, however, and we may turn to more pleasant themes in the story of the truer representatives of American womanhood of the mid-eighteenth century.

The name of one—the first in many ways—of these representatives will involuntarily rise to the thought, if not to the lips, of every reader of this book,—the name of Mary Washington, the mother of him who is still generally regarded as the greatest of Americans. It may be that the fame of Mary Washington is vicarious, that it rests entirely upon the character and exploits of her great son; but this, as with most of the verdicts of history, is not well deserved. The greatness of George Washington may not be called in question; but it is no treason to assert—he would have been the first to acknowledge—that the foundations of that greatness, both of character and achievement, were the handiwork of his mother. She was herself great in all the qualities that make for grandeur in womanhood. Here is what is said of her by one of her biographers:

"She was remarkable for vigor of intellect, strength of resolution, and inflexible firmness wherever principle was concerned. Devoted to the education of her children, her parental government and guidance have been described by those who knew her as admirably adapted to train the

youthful mind to wisdom and virtue. With her, affection was regulated by a calm and just judgment. She was distinguished, moreover, by that well marked quality of genius, a power of acquiring and maintaining influence over those with whom she associated. Without inquiring into the philosophy of this mysterious ascendancy, she was content to employ it for the noblest ends. It contributed, no doubt, to deepen the effect of her instructions."

This is critical rather than enthusiastic praise, and therefore the more worthy to be trusted. Nor are all Mrs. Washington's virtues here set down. She was a woman of exemplary piety of the good old quietist school; she was religious without being theological. She was a notable housewife and manager, and she earned the fine old title of "lady" by being indeed an almsgiver, though her lack of wealth limited her power in this respect. Her already quoted biographer, in her somewhat stilted but earnest language, says: "Her charity to the poor was well known; and having not wealth to distribute, it was necessary that what her benevolence dispensed should be supplied by domestic economy and industry. How peculiar a grace," adds our biographer, with well modulated enthusiasm, "does this impart to the benefits flowing from a sympathizing heart!"

La Fayette said of Madam Washington that she belonged to the times of Sparta and ancient Rome rather than to those of his own day; and Mrs. Sigourney, whose fame as a poet has now failed, but who once was held in high esteem, thus wrote on the occasion of laying the corner-stone for the monument erected at Fredericksburg:

> "Methinks we see thee, as in olden times,
> Simple in garb, majestic and serene,—
> Unawed by 'pomp and circumstance'—in truth
> Inflexible—and with a Spartan zeal

Repressing vice and making folly grave.
Thou didst not deem it woman's part to waste
Life in inglorious sloth, to sport awhile
Amid the flowers, or on the summer wave,
Then fleet like the ephemeron away,
Building no temple in her children's hearts,
Save to the vanity and pride of life
Which she had worshipped."

Better sentiment than poetry, perhaps; but serving to show concerning Mary Washington the thought of a day nearer to her, and therefore truer in judgment than our own.

Withal, Madam Washington was a woman of the most perfect simplicity of bearing and of character. When her illustrious son returned to her after leading the armies of his country to their final victory, she talked with him of his perils and privations, of old friends, of her home and affairs; but said no word of the glory which he had won. To her he was still her son, and not the great general or even the beloved patriot. At the ball given that night in his honor she appeared "arrayed in the very plain, yet becoming garb worn by the Virginia lady of the olden time. Her address, always dignified and imposing, was courteous, though reserved. She received the complimentary attentions which were profusely paid her, without evincing the slightest elevation; and at an early hour, wishing the company much enjoyment of their pleasures, and observing that it was time for old people to be at home, retired, leaning, as before, on the arm of her son."

When La Fayette, exuberant Frenchman that he was, in her presence eulogized to the skies the prowess and deeds of his chief, the mother of that chief replied, with a simplicity admirably contrasting with the high-flown encomiums of the marquis: "I am not surprised at what

George has done, for he was always a very good boy." Goodness and greatness were undisseverable in her mind. She was the *Madame Mère* of this country in station and the gift of a hero to the world; but greater contrast than that existing between the two women in all other respects —save perhaps in strength of will and purpose—could hardly be conceived; and the world will surely always accord the palm for true greatness to Madam Washington rather than to the mother of Napoleon.

It was in character and gift to the nation only, and not in incident, that the life of Madam Washington deserves chronicle; and others now demand notice in this chapter. Though the wife of Washington will be spoken of in an ensuing chapter, as being the first of the "first ladies of the land," mention must not be omitted of one whose very existence has been well-nigh forgotten—the sister of Washington. Of her, it is true, there is little to be gathered; but we are told that "she was a most majestic woman, and so strikingly like the brother that it was a matter of frolic to throw a cloak around her and place a military hat upon her head; and such was the perfect resemblance that had she appeared on her brother's steed, battalions would have presented arms and senates risen to do homage to the chief." Further she was not noted, and she lived her life in quiet, hardly coming within the radiance cast around by the deeds done by her illustrious brother. Only for his sake does she deserve notice here.

Hardly to that brother did the country owe greater debt than to the women whom it had nurtured. Patriotic as were the majority of American men, ready to suffer as well as to die in the cause of country, they were less patriotic, and their endurance was less splendid, than that shown by the women of our land. The patriotism evinced itself in

many different ways; sometimes in mere sallies of wit, as with the famous Miss Franks, the daughter of a Jewish merchant. Rebecca Franks was celebrated for her wit and accomplishments. She was a loyalist at heart, and afterward married Sir Henry Johnson, an English general; but her keen jests at the expense of the British did not impress them with her devotion to their cause. When, at a ball in New York, Sir Henry Clinton, then holding on with rapidly relaxing grasp to English dominance in America, called to the musicians to play *Britons, strike home!* Miss Franks remarked that what he should have said was "Britons, go home!" Other ironies are credited to her; but none, probably, having such keen point as the repartee of a South Carolina maiden, in whose presence Colonel Tarleton spoke sneeringly of Colonel Washington and wished he "could see this paragon!" "Had you looked *behind you* at the battle of the Cowpens, Colonel Tarleton," replied the young lady, "you would have had that pleasure!" Whereat the hard-fighting dragoon, who on that day had run harder than he had fought, was much discomfited.

This was the spirit of the American patriot woman; but it often evinced itself in ways more serviceable to the cause of freedom. When Washington was encamped at White Marsh a surprise was planned against him; and it would undoubtedly have proved exceedingly disastrous had not the plan been overheard by Lydia Darrah, who lived in the house on Second Street, Philadelphia, opposite the mansion occupied by General Howe, where the plan was discussed, the family being supposed to be in bed. Lydia returned to her room after her espionage and had the nerve to remain quiet, as if asleep, when one of the officers knocked on her door to inform her that the conclave was over. Then, with quick ingenuity, she told

her husband, a loyalist, that there was need of flour and that she must go to Frankford to procure it; and, having on this pretext secured egress from the British lines, she hastened to White Marsh. On her way she met Colonel Craig, of the light horse, and to him confided her secret; then, with lightened heart, she hastened back and managed to return unsuspected. The surprise consequently failed; but the part played by the demure little Quakeress was never guessed, though the British knew that some one had betrayed their plan to the American general. Had they suspected, it must have gone hard with Lydia; but she escaped the consequences of her brave act, which might have been death, while her country reaped the benefits thereof.

Not so marked by the evidence of personal courage, yet splendid in its patriotic self-sacrifice, was the spirit shown by Rebecca Motte when her house was occupied by the British soldiery under McPherson and besieged by Marion and Lee. McPherson's position was apparently impregnable; and he was holding out in anticipation of the coming of Lord Rawdon with a large force. Mrs. Motte was a firm friend of the American cause and had often bestowed generous hospitality upon the American officers, including Lee himself. To burn the house seemed to be the sole means of dislodging McPherson; but how could the friends of liberty destroy the property of one so devoted to the cause as Mrs. Motte, a widow, and one who had often nursed back to life some stricken Continental soldier? But Mrs. Motte overheard the discussion, and she assured the leaders that she "was gratified with the opportunity of contributing to the good of her country and should view the approaching scene with delight." Moreover, when the generals had reluctantly determined upon the measure, she gave them a bow and arrows, which had been imported

from India, that by this means the flaming combustibles might be shot upon her roof. The plan was carried out and McPherson forced to surrender, while the house was burned to the ground. Mrs. Motte contemplated the destruction of her home with an unmoved smile, and busied herself in succoring and caring for the wounded—Tory as well as Whig, for suffering annihilates such distinctions—with a heart apparently as free from care and rejoicing in victory as if she had gained rather than lost by the day's work.

Another daughter of South Carolina, which State claimed Mrs. Motte as its own, displayed on more than one occasion qualities that fell nothing short of heroism. Martha Bratton was the wife of a revolutionary colonel, and she lived in a spot in York District that was exposed to all the storm of war that swept over the devoted State. Her husband was peculiarly obnoxious to the Tories, and Captain Huck—or Huyck, as it is spelled in the order of his commanding officer—was dispatched, after a severe defeat inflicted upon the loyal forces by troops under Colonel Bratton, to compel by force the wife to betray the husband into British hands. A soldier under Huck's command actually placed a reaping-hook at Mrs. Bratton's throat when she refused to reveal the whereabouts of her husband, and Huck did not interfere; but his second in command, with more decency, even if with a suspicion of insubordination, interposed in the lady's behalf, though not until she had looked death in the face for a time and had not recoiled. Threats were of no avail, and finally Huck abandoned his purpose as impracticable. The next day brought vengeance upon him for his brutality, for he was attacked by Colonel Bratton with a far smaller force, himself killed, and his troops utterly routed. The officer who had interfered in behalf of Mrs. Bratton was taken

prisoner and might have been hanged by the enraged Whigs had not the lady fortunately recognized him in time to preserve his life by her story of debt to him. Another anecdote of Mrs. Bratton attests her heroic firmness of character. Ammunition was very scarce with both patriots and Tories, and a portion of that sent by Governor Rutledge to the former had been confided to the care of Colonel Bratton and by him placed in an outhouse on his place. News of this came to some loyalists, who at once, in the absence of Colonel Bratton, organized a foray to seize the powder. But Mrs. Bratton was warned in time, and she immediately laid a train of powder to the outhouse, took her stand at the end of the train, and when the enemy appeared set fire to the train and blew up the outhouse with its valuable contents. The officer in command of the forayers was furious at being thus outwitted and demanded to know the perpetrator of the deed. Mrs. Bratton did not flinch. "It was I who did it," she replied. "Let the consequence be what it will, I glory in having prevented the mischief contemplated by the cruel enemies of my country." One hardly knows whether the more to admire the gallant bearing of the lady or the coolness which led her to await the actual coming of the enemy and not to destroy such valuable property until the necessity for doing so became immediate.

These were but types, though pronounced ones, of the spirit that was almost universal among the patriot women of America during those stormy and fateful days. It was to be found dominant throughout the land, from New England to the Carolinas, though of course it was more evident, and possibly more fervent, in those districts where the war actually set its foot. In feeling at least, women, when once aroused, are more intensely militant than men, as they are more patient and constant under suffering; and it

was to the women quite as much as to the men that our country owed its escape from the British yoke. The display of the feeling varied in its manifestations; but that feeling was ever present in the hearts of the American women of the revolutionary times. The ladies of Boston who abandoned, in the days of oppression, their cup of tea that the abhorrent taxes might not be enforced showed the same true patriotism, only needing opportunity to call it to higher pitch, as did their sisters who bore the insults and outrages of a brutal soldiery when Tarleton rode across stricken South Carolina and planted a hatred that bore fruit in the ambush and the night attack. The women of New England bound upon the backs of husbands and sons and even fathers the old knapsack and placed in their hands the old musket and sent them forth, ready to go, yet full of fears for those left behind, to Lexington and Bunker Hill.

It must not, however, be supposed that all the enthusiasm, all the depth of feeling, all the patriotism even, was in the camp, feminine or masculine, of the Continentals. Among the Tories, or Loyalists, as they liked best to call themselves, there were many hearts which beat with true devotion to their country, yet which believed that country's best duty, because its highest, was to be found in loyalty to the king. Especially was this the case in New York and Philadelphia, which were the strongholds of British possession. It is true that there were many, women as well as men, even more of the former, whose loyalty was but lip-service, who cherished in their hearts a devotion to the cause of freedom to which they dared not give utterance for fear of oppression; but there were also many who loved the flag of England as the banner of all that was truest and best, and who looked upon the resisters of British authority as rebels of the baser sort. They were

as honest as were their opponents, and they were as fanatical; and they are entitled to the same respect for their devotion to a losing cause as are their rivals for their loyalty to one that was victorious.

In 1778 there was held in the staid city of Philadelphia a certain entertainment given by the officers of Sir William Howe to their general, which was to pass into history under the name of the Meschianza, or the Medley. It was a most gorgeous pageant, wherein were tournament and feat and dance; and to it came most of the belles of Philadelphia, forgetful of or uncaring for the army of their brethren, ragged and barefooted, and still suffering from their winter of starving amid the snows of Valley Forge. The loyalist ladies were in full feather, more literally than would now be the case, the nodding plume then adorning the head of the dame as frequently as it did the helmet of the soldier. Present are such famous toasts as Miss Becky Franks, Miss Peggy Chew, Miss Nancy White, Miss Becky Bond, and others. The Misses Shippen, equal to any in beauty and wit, do not grace the occasion by their charms; they have fully intended to be present, and have even ordered Turkish dresses for the occasion, since fancy costumes are *en règle;* but there has been issued a parental ukase to the contrary, Mr. Edward Shippen at the last moment declining to allow his daughters to make merry with the foes of his country, or it may be that the appearance of the Turkish dresses in the eyes of his Quaker neighbors has influenced his decision, for Mr. Shippen is not a patriot. But there are enough without these ladies, and the merriment is unalloyed. It is a typical scene, this of the Meschianza, even though never before has the revel been of such ornate character; for the belles of New York and Philadelphia and the macaronis of the army often forget the perils of war in the delights of

the social function, unmindful of the waxing or waning of the patriot or the royal cause.

Of those present at the Meschianza there was one whose romance merits note in these pages, Miss Peggy Chew. Among the officers who on that day and night tilted and danced with the best was one Major John André, and his motto of "No Rival" was carried out at least in his connection with Miss Chew. That they were betrothed was the general belief; that they were lovers may be set down as certain. But a little more than two years later Major André, technically if not actually guilty of being a spy, was led beneath the fatal tree at Tappan, and poor Peggy Chew's romance was over forever. If we could leave her in her sorrow to weep for her lover and the overthrown cause of her king, she might pass down as one of the ideal heroines of sad romance; but fact somewhat hampers our sympathy with the lady, for some seven years after the death of André, Miss Chew married General John Eager Howard, the staunch fighter of the Cowpens; and the general, as was but natural, always denied, even with strange oaths, that his wife had ever cared for one who to him was but a common spy.

So the belle of the Meschianza changed her political faith with her love loyalty; but another who has been named in connection with that entertainment shamed many a woman in faith of another kind. With her sisters, Miss Peggy Shippen had been held from the revel; but she had been toasted there. Yet she became, but a short time afterward, the wife of one of the most gallant soldiers that ever drew sword for the cause of America, Benedict Arnold. Had he been as true as he was brave he might have left an honored name; and, even as it was, though history has not yet done justice in this wise, Arnold's bitter resentment toward the ungrateful Continental Congress

was not without reason and excuse; nevertheless, his action resulting therefrom was unpardonable. In his treason, as was but natural, his splendid services were forgotten by his countrymen; but his wife was true to him in his degradation as in his glory. In an interview with Washington at West Point she even went so far as to accuse the commander-in-chief of conspiring to murder her infant as well as to degrade her husband; and we can forgive, as did Washington, even this to the tortured woman. During his residence in England after the Revolution, Arnold said to an Englishman who had met him casually and, being unaware of his personality, knowing only his nationality, asked him for some letters of introduction to be used in a purposed trip to America: "Sir, I am the only American in the world whose introduction would do you more harm than good; I am Benedict Arnold." There was here more than the bitterness of ostracism; but that bitterness, which made all his life a torment, never repelled his wife or caused her faith and love to swerve. She was loyal with even a higher loyalty than that given by her sisters of America to the cause of her country, for she was faithful in heart as in deed to one who had in all ways proved unworthy of faith.

It was this same Arnold who was mentioned in the diary of another belle of Philadelphia, Miss Sally Wister, when she wrote: "Our brave, our heroic General Washington was escorted by fifty of the Life Guard, with drawn swords. Each day he acquires an addition to his goodness. We have been very anxious to know how the inhabitants of Philadelphia have fared. I understand that General Arnold, who bears a good character, has the command of the city." She was writing from the Foulks estate, in Montgomery County, where she was staying for a time, and her diary, which concludes with the above

quoted entry, is full of such warm expressions of patriotism that none can doubt that Miss Sally, who died a spinster, placed the cause of America even before the attractions of such men as Major Stoddert and Captain Dandridge, who vainly attempted to influence her to "change her condition," as the quaint old phrase puts it.

The days of the Revolution were full of romance as well as of sterner history, and while the women of Massachusetts and the Carolinas, as well as those of interior Pennsylvania and rural New York, proved themselves made of sterner stuff than is the custom to expect from their sex, the belles of the great cities—great only for their times—of New York and Philadelphia flirted and danced and jested and made themselves in all ways agreeable to the red-clad soldiers of England. It may be that these last ladies unwittingly and against their will served the cause of their country by enervating the soldiers of the king and keeping them from the sterner training which was making hardy veterans of the Continentals. But romance and the stern aspects of war were not infrequently blended in strange fashion, as in the case of Mary Piper—better known as Polly Piper—of Boston, who was loved by a British soldier named Samuel Lee. Before the beginning of the struggle the Pipers moved to Concord; and when the "regulars" marched upon that place to secure the ammunition which was reported to General Gage as being stored there, Lee went with his regiment. But his heart was not in his work: love had taught him something, and he no longer, as at first, looked upon all Americans as benighted savages and their cause as flat treason. Miss Polly had scorned his suit as that of a British soldier, and this fact had worked a result. In the "running fight" at Concord he did not fire his musket; but he was shot as he ran from the field and was carried, severely wounded, into

a house where the stricken were being cared for. A woman bent over him; and he opened his eyes to meet those of Polly Piper. He recovered, but not to serve again as a soldier of England; he returned no more to the red flag, but married Miss Polly and lived quietly in Concord until his death in 1790. Thus love won from the enemies of America at least one sword, and thus was romance justified of its works.

The patriotic spirit which flamed throughout the land burned with no steadier or more brilliant glow than among the women. All are familiar with the famous picture entitled *The Spirit of '76;* but that picture is incomplete. The octogenarian and the boy should be waved upon their march by the wife and the mother, sending husband and son forth to peril or death, while they themselves turn with a smile to the bearing of privation or actual starvation. Not more strongly and nobly did the "spirit of '76" flourish in the hearts of the sons of the oppressed country than in those of its daughters, nor was the response more splendid.

There was no distinction of high and low. The stately dame, lapped in luxury all her days and a stranger to hardship or even anxiety, gave up to her country's cause her dearest joys, and not only sent husband or son to the forefront of the battle, but herself, if she was in the path of war, bore unflinchingly the outrages of an incensed soldiery and saw her home given to the flames and the very lives of herself and her children threatened, and yet thought it not too great a price to pay for her country's liberty. The wife of the humble tiller of the soil, with perhaps even more complete, though hardly as recognized, surrender of self, sent forth with cheery words the breadwinner, the support of herself and her children, and turned with grand courage to keep them and herself from hunger, while her goodman was fighting for the rescue of his native land from oppression. Each bore her part, and all with no reserve of gift.

The ebullition of the feminine spirit of those days was often little less than fanatical in nature. Women do nothing by halves; they are faithful lovers and enthusiastic haters, and they are not always governed in either feeling by the monitions of unbiased justice or even judgment. In a letter from Mrs. Hannah Winthrop, of Cambridge, we find a reference to the fight at Lexington, which, in all its stiltedness of language, shows the fiery and bitter hatred that was held by patriot women for the enemies of their country: "Nor can she ever forget, nor will old Time ever erase, the horrors of that midnight cry, preceding the bloody massacre at Lexington, when we were roused from the benign slumbers of the season by beat of drum and ringing of bells, with the dire alarm that a thousand of the troops of George the Third had gone forth to murder the peaceful inhabitants of the surrounding villages. A few hours, with the dawning day, convinced us the bloody purpose was executing; the platoon firing assured us that the rising sun must witness the bloody carnage. Not knowing what the event would be at Cambridge, at the return of these bloody ruffians, and seeing another brigade dispatched to the assistance of the former, looking with the ferocity of barbarians, it seemed necessary to retire to some place of safety, till the calamity was passed."

The lady is evidently overfond of a certain epithet of sanguinary denotation, nor can she be complimented upon her high-flown style; but it is evident that behind the affectation of phrase there is an intense earnestness of hatred that stands as typical of its sexual source. To the patriot women of America the British were "ruffians" and "barbarians" and the most bloody-minded of human beings—just as to the Loyalists the Continentals were "rebels" and "traitors," for whom hanging would have been a punishment so mild as to suggest weakness in the

administrator. To the patriot woman poor old George III. was the very incarnation of all evil and malice, just as to the Tory lady another George was the vilest of ingrates to lead the armies of the rebels against the authority of so gracious a king as he of England. Both were honest in their extremes of fanaticism and so may well be pardoned, and even admired, for those extremes, with their resultant enthusiasm in the cause of freedom or loyalty.

Meanwhile there existed, though hardly flourished, the gentler arts among the women of America; and Mercy Warren, wife of James Warren and daughter of James Otis, she to whom Mrs. Winthrop's letter was addressed, wielded a more refined and therefore more effective pen than that of her friend, being the one female writer of her day who may be called notable. She was hardly less enthusiastic than Mrs. Winthrop in the cause of liberty, and she was possessed of a very respectable gift of satire which made her writings a power in their way. When there was discussed among the colonists the plan of suspending all commerce with Great Britain because of the vexed matter of the taxes, Mrs. Warren wrote a long poetic effusion which exemplifies her gift of satire, of which the best lines are these:

"'Tis true, we love the courtly mien and air,
The pride of dress, and all the debonair:
Yet Clara quits the more dressed négligé,
And substitutes the careless polancé;
Until some fair one from Britannia's court
Some jaunty dress, or newer taste, import;
This sweet temptation could not be withstood,
Though for the purchase paid her father's blood,
Though loss of freedom were the costly price,
Or flaming comets sweep the angry skies,
Or earthquakes rattle, or volcanoes roar;
Indulge this trifle, and she asks no more.
Can the stern patriot Clara's suit deny?
'Tis beauty asks, and reason must comply."

This is very fair satire, though it would have been better had the comets and earthquakes and volcanoes, which clearly would not be influenced by Clara's folly, been omitted from the lines; but, though doubtless the rebuke was merited by a few of the irresponsible and thoughtless girls of the day who made of fashion their one object of worship, the poem is a libel if applied to the majority of American women of the day, who sacrificed more than the whims of fashion in their devotion to the needs of their native land.

Mrs. Warren, however, did better work than that which has been cited. Her history of the Revolution was much admired and for years remained one of the standard works upon the subject, though it might be difficult to find a dozen copies of the book at the present time. It was rather personal in some of its political references, and its portrait of Adams brought about a rupture in the friendship that had long existed between the Warrens and the Adamses; but this was but for a time. Mrs. Warren's style was tainted with the affectation so prevalent in that day, and she was profuse in classical allusion, as were the majority of the authors of her period. She writes thus to Mr. Adams at the time of the calling together of the first Continental Congress: "Though you have condescended to ask my sentiments, in conjunction with those of a gentleman qualified both by his judgment and his integrity, as well as his attachment to the interest of his country, to advise at this important crisis, yet I shall not be so presumptuous as to offer anything but my fervent wishes that the enemies of America may hereafter for ever tremble at the wisdom and firmness, the prudence and justice of the delegates deputed from our cities, as much as did the Phocians of old at the power of the Amphictyons of Greece. But if the Locrians should in time appear among you, I

advise you to beware of choosing an ambitious Philip as your leader. Such a one might subvert the principles on which your institution is founded, abolish your order, and build up a monarchy on the ruins of the happy institution."

This extract shows not only the style of the writer, but the esteem in which she was held by some of the foremost men of the day; for Adams would not have "asked the sentiments" of one for whose judgment he had not profound respect.

Dramatist, poet, historian, and correspondent of some of the most noted men of her day, Mercy Warren stands as the foremost woman representative of American letters in Revolutionary days. It is true that her activities were by no means confined to this period, for she was born in 1728 and died in 1814, having thus passed eighty-seven years of well-filled life; but she is as much the woman writer of the Revolution as Freneau is its male poet. Perhaps neither name is familiar to the present generation; but Mercy Warren and Philip Freneau, if not of the highest order of their calling, did notable work in the cause of American letters, and the former is well worthy of being included in any work that purports to tell, however incompletely, the history of American womanhood.

The shadow passed at length, leaving the country maimed, bleeding, but still lusty with vigor and with the waxing strength of youth. The passing of the shadow found the women of America for the most part shorn of the gauds that women love, destitute of the lesser things of life, but filled with a proud sense of new birth with their country. To the triumphant result of the years of strife and struggle they had contributed in full measure; and they were ready, however they might be hampered by present conditions, to reap the fruit of the period of contest no less than the men, though in different fashion.

Moreover, though in hidden methods, they had asserted themselves and the power of their womanhood as never before. They had turned from the sporadic and eccentric attempts of some of their sex to win fame by religious leadership or other such manifestations of restless ambition; they had shown their power of concentrated and universal consecration to a cause when it was found worthy thereof, and they had evidenced their intensity of devotion to that which was of the best. The period of formation was over; the battle-filled days of the Revolution saw the birth of the American woman as an individual entity.

There is yet another name which must be recorded here, less for the merit of the work done than for the sentiment which attaches to that work. There still stands on Arch Street, Philadelphia, the little house where Betsy Ross made the first American flag that was given to the breeze of battle and conquest. Not perhaps the very first American flag, since Paul Jones's rattlesnake flag might fitly claim that honor, but the first to be recognized as in any way national and to survive, and therefore honored as truly the first of its kind. It is not Betsy Ross, but the birth of the flag of our country, of which we think when we look at that little house and remember why it is honored. But it is fitting that the maker of that flag which is the symbol of our country should find mention here, even though she had no other claim to be remembered among the notable women of our land.

And her fate is happier than that of her sisters of the Revolution, for the outward evidence of her work remains while that of the rest has passed away and is forgotten. Yet their work, regarded as done by the women of our country in general, was greater than hers, for she but furnished the symbol of that which they, by their courage

and endurance of hardness and enthusiasm and faith, made a living thing. Nor must there be forgotten another contribution of the women to the cause of their native land,—their prayers. It is a scoffing age, but there still remain some who believe that prayer is of avail, that "more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of," and these will not doubt that the petitions which went up from the length and breadth of the land for the success of the beloved cause were effectual in result. There were many women who, from lack of opportunity or power, had nothing else to give than their prayers for their country; and these they gave in full measure and with a fervency that doubtless helped to win the answer that they sought.

Chapter VIII

The Women of Canada

VIII

THE WOMEN OF CANADA

THE Revolution marked an era in the social as in the political history of the United States, and the transition furnishes an opportunity to tell something of the women of Canada. For the sake of completeness, it is needful also to cast a fleeting glance at those strange hyperboreans, the Eskimo, and this chapter has seemed the most convenient and appropriate place for such consideration.

There is no necessity to give any detailed account of the dwellers of the ice-bound coast region. Ethnologists are not agreed on even the main points of their origin and history, and recessive statements could be but speculation. Of the actual conditions of Eskimo life,—these conditions being simple and few,—most people know all that is to be known. Yet it may be well to remark in the inception of this account that the name "Eskimo" is ungrateful to the people whom we thus designate; it was bestowed upon them by their enemies, the northern Indians, and in the Indian language signifies "eaters of fish," a term of disdain. The people term themselves, and should in common courtesy be termed, the Innuits, which means simply "Our Folks." Thus, therefore, shall they be called in this account.

The Innuits are a nomadic people, living during the winter in *igloos,* or ice huts, during the summer in skin

tents called *tupies,* but moving from place to place as chance or the necessity of sustenance suggests. They have not attained a high degree of civilization and may indeed be termed semi-savages; yet they have some excellent traits, together with some contradictory ones. Thus, they will steal anything on which they can lay their hands; but they hold a lie in utter detestation, and to *shay-va-loo* (tell a lie) is to brand the teller as worthy of social ostracism. The first of these traits may arise from the existence among them of some of the socialistic theories of our own civilization; but the second is not a purely civilized trait, as civilization is known to us.

Living in a community of most primitive conditions of existence, even in the household, morals are not at a high standard among the Innuits. Yet there is to be found among them a high degree of domesticity in certain directions, and their women appear to be affectionately cared for and held in high esteem for semi-savages. The personal appearance of these ladies is far from captivating to a Caucasian eye, they being as a rule of a figure only to be described as "pudgy," while their features are coarse and unintelligent. Their dress is the same as that of the men: Long stockings of reindeer skin, with the hair next the person; socks of eider-duck skin, with feathers on both sides; socks of seal skin, with the hair outside; boots, the legs of reindeer skin, the hair outside, the soles of seal skin; and a jacket of reindeer skin, fitting to the form, though not tightly. In this latter article of apparel is to be found the sole difference between the male and female costume, the women attaching to their jackets long tails, which reach almost to the ground, while their jackets also have hoods, frequently used for carrying their children. The women also, as is natural, adorn their costumes to a degree not common among the men; one belle was described

by Mr. Hall, who spent two winters among this curious race, as having a fringe of colored beads across the neck of her jacket, bowls of Britannia-metal teaspoons down the front flap, and a double row of copper cents, surmounted by a bell from an old-fashioned clock, down the tail, which was bordered by a beading of elongated lead shot. But such extravagance of adornment as this is rare and can be attained only by the most wealthy. The ladies also wear finger rings and headbands of polished brass.

Such is the normal winter dress of the Innuit women; and the summer costume, while less characteristic, varies but little in general form from that of the colder months. Their life is monotonous and absolutely tame, according to civilized ideas. They play at times upon the *keeloun,* a kind of tambourine; but as a rule their merrymaking is confined to feasting, and of the conduct at these feasts the less said the better. Monogamy is the rule among the Innuits, and the women are generally affectionate wives and mothers, especially the latter. When Tookoolito and her husband, Ebierbing, visited America in the middle of the late century, they lost their child, "Butterfly," an infant of about a year old, and poor little Tookoolito was inconsolable; she longed to die, that she might find again her lost "Butterfly," and she tended the little grave, made in the burial ground at Groton, Connecticut, with the tenderest care, placing thereon, according to the Innuit superstition, the favorite toys of the little one, that it might have them in its sojourn in the beyond. The love of parents for their children is indeed one of the most pronounced and most estimable traits of the Innuit character.

This brief sketch of the women of the hyperboreans must suffice, for there are more important matters of feminine history demanding attention, and indeed the Innuit culture, if so it may be termed, presents few salient

features as to the condition of its women. In status and conditions they occupy a place about midway between the woman of the Indian tribes and her of the lower phases of our own civilization.

Southward now to the land of the mixed blood, where the two ancient enemies, France and England, have joined in a race that owes allegiance to the latter but retains many of the characteristics of the former. To write the history of Canadian women is largely to speak of individuals, since there has been but little alteration or development of conditions of a social nature. Yet some may be noted.

The first settlement of Canada, in which term is of course included Acadia, or, as it is now known, Nova Scotia, was touched by a strange romance. The Sieur de Roberval was on his voyage to join the great Jacques Cartier and with him to found a colony, when he discovered that his niece, Marguerite de Roberval, loved, more fondly than was consistent with the Sieur's conceptions of right, a young cavalier of his company. A lonely island, known as the Isle of Demons, was sighted soon after this discovery was made; and Roberval sternly condemned his niece to perpetual imprisonment on this barren rock. Her lover jumped overboard and swam after his beloved; and together they lived, forgotten of men, on the island, thus founding the first Canadian home. A child was born to them, but it died early, and Marguerite's lover, whose name has not come down to us, soon followed his infant. Marguerite with her own hands hollowed the graves of those she loved, and then she lived on, more lonely than even Alexander Selkirk, on this island which was for her full of terrors, real and imagined; the nature of the latter may be guessed from the name bestowed upon the place. She was clad in skins and learned to use the

guns with which, in strange mercy, she had been provided by her uncle; and it was not until more than two years had passed that she was rescued by some Maloine fishermen and found her way to her native land. Here she lived in seclusion until her death, which did not come until she had passed the number of years allotted to man.

So the first Canadian home was founded in romance, and, better yet, in true love; and Marguerite de Roberval, faithful wife in fact if not by title, deserves to be held in honor among Canadian traditions as the tutelary saint of the Canadian household. Nor was there lack of romance in the further story of the women of Canada, while love and faith are also to be found prominent in that story.

Of the condition of the women in the Acadian colony but little is known. It was probably, as a rule, that which was common to the French peasantry of the time; but there was in the settlement a lack of women, as we know from the account of Marc Lescarbot in 1507, wherein he tells us that it was owing to the want of good housewives that the cows which had been imported at so many pains died soon after their arrival; and much of his treatise is given up to bewailing the absence from the colony of women in sufficient numbers to make it pleasant and thriving. Yet among these colonists, who were rudely driven from their homes by the strong hand of England, there were women, as we know from the poetical story of Evangeline, too familiar in Longfellow's poem to be narrated here, as well as from the later story of the Lady de la Tour, a Huguenot girl who had married Charles la Tour, the seigneur of Port Royal. It was a time of conspiracy and internecine strife among the people of Acadia, and though conspiracy and strife were petty enough in cause and action and result, they were none the less important to the actors in them. There arose on the part of Charles

de Menou, Seigneur d'Aulnay de Charnisay, a plot to deprive La Tour of his seigniory, which Charnisay, whose lands adjoined those of his rival, claimed as his own. The French court and the governor's house at Boston, then tenanted by the stern John Endicott, were made in turn arenas of dispute, but we are concerned more with the appeal to force which came at last. Charles La Tour had gone to Boston to seek aid against his rival, leaving his fort in the hands of his wife, who had already been of sterling service in baffling the intrigues of Charnisay, when his opponent, hearing that the chatelaine was alone in command of the fort and had but fifty retainers and little ammunition, determined to take by force that which he coveted. So he sailed into the Bay of Saint John, where stood Fort La Tour, and summoned the garrison to surrender. But the Lady de la Tour was as dauntless in courage as she was faithful in heart to the fortunes of her husband, and she answered with cannon balls. Charnisay replied in kind, but the lady had the better of the argument, though conducted on principles not congenial to her sex, and she forced her foe to retire in discomfiture, notwithstanding his superiority in men and arms. She herself directed and inspired the defence, and it is said that she even laid some of the guns with her own hands. Her triumph was brief, however, for Charnisay returned in two months' time; and though she again gallantly defended her home and her husband's stronghold, her situation grew at last so desperate that she yielded to fair proffers of treaty and surrendered. But the victor had no intention of holding to his plighted word, and he promptly hanged every man in the garrison, with the exception of one who turned hangman as the price of his own miserable life. To make the blot upon his escutcheon yet fouler, Charnisay actually had the rope placed around the neck of the

chatelaine herself; but, though her heroic spirit disdained to plead for safety to such a monster, either whim or some fear of results, for he could not be accused of any humane impulse, caused him to remit the sentence. It might almost as well have been carried out, however, for in a few days the lady died from grief at her defeat and the baseness of treachery to which she and her followers had been subjected.

Whittier has sung the wrath of the husband of the Lady de la Tour; but he omits to mention, nor would it chime well with the rest of the poem, that years afterward that husband married the widow of the man who had placed the rope around the neck of the heroic lady, and who had been drowned in the Penobscot River while on a voyage. The marriage, which found its celebrants at an advanced age for matrimonial union, settled forever the sternest struggle that Acadia had known; but even this desirable result scarcely enables us to forgive the Seigneur de la Tour for his treason to the memory of his devoted wife in thus allying himself to the house of him who had done her to death.

With this story of the most famous of the women of Acadia let us turn to Canada proper. It was not for some time after the first futile and later partially successful attempts to found a colony upon the bleak shores of the Saint Lawrence that there was to be found on those shores the refining influence that comes from feminine companionship. The first permanent colony, however, which established itself on the heights of Quebec, held among its members one of the gentler sex, Dame Hébert, the wife of Louis Hébert, who had been an Acadian. His wife was a woman of courage and resource, as befitted a pioneer colonist; and she had need of both qualities in her fight with the conditions that pressed so hardly upon the new

colonists. She first set her foot upon Canadian soil in 1617, and she lived through the most remarkable of the mutations of the first colony, including the surrender to the English and the treaty of Saint Germain which again gave Canada to France. For the first three years of her sojourn in the new land she was the only woman on those shores; and when in 1620 she was joined in her isolation by Hélène de Champlain, wife of the great pioneer of New France, it was but for a time, hardly four years in all. At the expiration of that period Madame de Champlain returned, broken in health and spirits by her exile, to her beloved France, held by her in higher esteem than her gallant but cold husband, and there she entered a convent, leaving behind her a memory as one of the two women who first inhabited the wilderness of New France, and leaving also her name to an island in the Saint Lawrence. Though much may be said in extenuation of the homesickness and lack of endurance found in the young wife of the great Champlain, she was no heroine as was Dame Hébert, and her easy acceptance of the Catholic faith as her own after her marriage,—she had been a staunch Huguenot,—moved thereto rather by the atmosphere of her new home than by any conviction, is suggestive of the real lack of strength in her character. Yet she is worthy of remembrance as one of the women pioneers of Canada.

Those of her sex who followed in her westward footsteps were generally made of sterner stuff than the faint-hearted Hélène; but it was long before she knew a successor as one of the women of New France, for her return to the land of her birth was in 1624, and it was not until 1634 that the third woman, the wife of the surgeon Giffard, came to found a home amid the wilds of the west. It is true that there were two girls, the daughters of Dame Hébert, in the colony even before the coming of Madame

de Champlain; but these could be considered only as involuntary pioneers and do not deserve to be placed among those who came of their free will, or for love of their husbands. One of these daughters of Dame Hébert, however, furnished in her union with Stephen Jonquest occasion for the first marriage ceremony celebrated in Canada, a ceremony which preceded by more than two years that first celebrated in New England.

For more than two decades after the death of Champlain in 1635, the tide of immigration was very feeble; but it bore on its bosom two notable women in the annals of Canada—Madame de la Peltrie, the founder of the first girls' school ever opened in the province, and Mother Marie Guyard, the honored head of that school. In 1659 these two and five other women, three calling themselves Hospitalières, arrived at the little settlement of Quebec, consisting of scarcely two hundred and fifty souls. They came for the glory of God, to work His work among the Indians; and they were received with all the honors the little colony could compass. Madame de la Peltrie, the head of the peaceful expedition, found the state of affairs worse than she had been told by the missionaries who had urged her coming; but she faced the difficulties and discouragements of the situation with a heart as gallant as that of those of her sex who dared "battle, murder, and sudden death" at the hands of the Indians in their search for a home, and the Ursuline Convent at Quebec is an enduring monument to the memory of the women who did so much for the uplifting of the Indians of Canada.

Her coadjutor, Mother Marie Guyard, left behind her a name no less honored than that of Madame de la Peltrie—a name unexcelled for the virtues of piety, constancy, self-sacrifice, and devotion to the cause of degraded humanity. Her work among the Indians bore noble fruit, even if

hardly to the extent of her wishes. She had many discouragements to face and obstacles to overcome; among them, not a few at the hands of those who should have been her allies. In 1661 the new governor, Baron Dubois d'Avaugour, moved thereto by an ill-advised plea on the part of a missionary for the commutation of the sentence passed upon a woman for violating the law that no brandy should be sold to the Indians, gave free license to the sale of spirituous liquors throughout the dominion. The result was deplorable and almost nullified the work of a score of weary years; and Mother Marie, sick at heart, wrote thus to her son:

"I have told you in another letter about a cross that is far harder to bear than the incursions of the Iroquois. There are in this country certain Frenchmen so despicable and so little touched by the fear of God that they are ruining all our new Christians by giving them strong drink, such as wine and brandy, to get their beaver-skins from them."

It was because of this and kindred causes that Mother Marie deemed her life-work a failure at last; but the thought was erroneous. She left her influence in the hearts of many of her Indian pupils, and she gave to Canada by her efforts the school which is one of the noblest monuments of the past of Quebec.

The Hospitalières, who had come over in the same ship with the founders of the girls' school, founded the hospital that is now known as Quebec's Hôtel-Dieu; at first, their philanthropic efforts on behalf of the Indians found nothing but failure as reward, for an unfortunate epidemic that broke out soon after the establishment of the hospital in an old storeroom, and the death of most of the patients there treated, persuaded the red men that the hospital was a scheme devised for their extinction rather than for

their good. But here, too, perseverance in good works overcame stupendous difficulties, though here again, as well, the result did not take the form which was at first intended. Yet none the lighter is the praise to be awarded to the noble women who undertook the work and who carried it on in the face of danger and failure, and the names of such women as Marie Irwin, Catherine Chevalier, and Madame d'Ailleboust, the wife of the third governor of Quebec, are still deservedly held in honor by the dwellers in New France.

In the younger sister colony to Quebec, that of Montreal, Jeanne Mance founded a hospital with the money supplied her by Madame Bullion, a rich and pious widow living in Old France but interested in all projects for the amelioration of existent conditions in the new land. The hospital was of excellent service in caring for the wounded who had done battle with the fierce Iroquois, and many a stricken soldier blessed the name of its founder. Marguerite de Bourgeoys, of whom Parkman writes as the "fair ideal of Christian womanhood, a flower of earth expanding in the rays of heaven," on her part founded in Montreal a girls' school, and her work so prospered that she actually built by her own efforts a church, now known, though in its second building, as "Notre Dame de Bonsecours." She and Jeanne Mance were known as "the two mothers of Montreal," and well did they deserve the honorable title.

The work and character of Marguerite de Bourgeoys are thus admirably summed up by a recent biographer:

"The visible result of Marguerite de Bourgeoys' long life in Canada was the institution of a band of young women who were bound by vows to teach the young, the building of a church, and the establishment of schools for the instruction of Indian and French children. She died January 12, 1700. Her heart, which had beaten with

pain at the cry of suffering childhood, with agony at the shriek of the tortured victim of Iroquois cruelty, with shame at the contentions of Christian brotherhoods, and with rapture when even one little child received the anointing drops of baptism,—that heart, encased in its silver covering, now rests in the chapel of a convent where she so long labored and loved."

These were the triumphs of peace, won by heroines of endurance and patience rather than of fiery physical courage; but of the latter quality there were many brilliant examples among the women of the French settlers of Canada. Madeleine de Verchères is both famous and typical among these sterner heroines. She was but fourteen years old when she found herself in charge of her father's fort, that fort suddenly burst upon by the savage Iroquois, and she with a garrison consisting of two soldiers, two boys, and an old man of eighty. There were women and children also, but these were detriments, not aids. The gallant girl, though actually surprised in the fields by the marauders, managed to close the gates, took command of the panic-stricken company,—the soldiers were as frightened and helpless as the rest,—and soon organized a defence which lasted for a week, and was ended by the arrival of a succoring force. Her little brothers, but ten and twelve years of age respectively, nobly seconded her efforts; but the whole glory of the splendid defence was due to Madeleine, whose account of the occurrence is extant. She inherited heroic blood on the distaff side, for her mother, two years before, had held the same fort with but four armed men against an attack by the Iroquois, the siege lasting two days.

The conditions of the first half century of Canadian colonization were generally similar to those existing in New England, of course, with a difference of racial impulses

and customs. That half century saw but slow development of the country; but between 1665 and 1667 the coming of the Carignan regiment, sent by Louis XIV. to establish firmly his hold upon the new dominion, brought about a change. In order to prevent desertion and make the soldiers truly at home in the land, it was soon found necessary that there should be established homes, and to this end women were necessary. But women were precisely the rarest treasure in the Canadas, and there was therefore adopted the plan, already executed in the English colonies of the South, of importing girls as wives. Accordingly, from time to time, there arrived consignments of maidens, called "the king's girls," and semi-annual wife-markets were held in Quebec and Montreal. The character of these imported ladies was not invariably of the best; but a trifle such as this did not affect the soldiers of the baser sort, who were willing to overlook past peccadillos in consideration of the dowry which their wives brought them and in hope of gaining the bounty offered for the rearing of large families. Moreover, there was passed a law which provided that every unmarried young man, who had not within two weeks of the arrival of a company, entered into the matrimonial state should be deprived of the privileges of hunting, fishing, and trading, while the persistent bachelors were to be excluded from all places of honor and responsibility, and it was even suggested that they should be branded as felons. Marriage was certainly esteemed honorable in those days.

The account of La Hontan, a witty officer of the Canadian forces, of the first coming of "the king's girls" is worth quoting in part:

"After these first inhabitants there came a folk useful to the country and a good riddance to the Kingdom.

There arrived one day at Quebec a small fleet loaded with Amazons and crowds of females, Nuns of Paphos or of Cythera conducting this precious cargo. I have been told the circumstances of their coming, and I cannot resist the pleasure of sharing the story with you.

"This chaste folk was led to the pasture by old and prudish Shepherdesses. As soon as they had arrived, these wrinkled dames passed their soldiery in review, and having separated them into three classes, each group entered a different room. As they had to crowd quite close together on account of the smallness of the place, they made rather a pleasant decoration, and the good merchant Cupid had no reason to be ashamed of his wares. Never had he made a better assortment. Blonde, brunette, red, black, fat, thin, large, small,—he could satisfy the most bizarre and most fastidious tastes.

"The report of the new cargo being spread abroad, all the well-intentioned in the way of multiplication hastened thither. As it was not permitted to examine all and still less to take them on trial, it was a case of buying a pig in a poke, or rather of buying the whole piece from the sample. But the disposal of them was none the less rapid on this account. Each selected his partner, and in a fortnight these three lots of venison had been taken away with all the seasoning that could be taken with them.

"The next day the Governor-general caused to be distributed to them enough provisions to give them courage to embark upon this stormy sea. They went to housekeeping almost as did Noah in the Ark, with an ox, a cow, a pair of swine, a pair of fowls, two barrels of salted meat, and a piece of money. The officers were more fastidious than the soldiers and allied themselves with the daughters of other officers or of the richer settlers who had been established in the country for nearly a century."

The coming of these girls in such numbers, followed or accompanied as they were by many young Frenchmen of gay, if not dissolute habits, produced a natural change in the aspect of the social conditions. Simplicity became a thing of the past, and the merriment, as in New England, at last became scandalous to those of graver trend of thought. Some restrictive laws were passed, among others one which provided that all girls and women should be in their houses by nine of the night; but as some who incurred the penalty were dragged from their beds and whipped by officers of the town, the punishment seems hardly less conducive to lesion of good morals than the crime itself. As in New England, laws regulating personal adornment were passed, and the wearer of a top-knot was refused admission to the communion; and all these stern enactments had about as much repressive effect as their fellows in the lower colonies,—practically none.

From this time forward there began to grow in New France the follies and frivolities of her mother country, and there arose that which is termed "society," at least in the growing towns. Quebec and Montreal flourished, and the young, and also the old at times, frolicked and danced and made merry. On the frontiers there was still some of the fine simplicity of olden days; but those frontiers were being pushed further and further away from proximity to the towns. At last there came the time when the infamous Bigot ruled in Quebec, caring for nothing but to fill his purse and take his pleasures; and then Canadian society touched its lowest. There was thought of little beyond rout and revel; Bigot ruled as if king of New France, and emulated his sovereign in Old France by having his Pompadour in the person of Angélique de Pean, who was as grasping and reckless as was her French compeer. She was a beautiful woman, the wife

of Monsieur de Pean,—who considered the surrender of his wife to Bigot but a fair return for certain lucrative offices,—and she did not, as it is said, though not proved, hesitate to stain her hands with blood in order to maintain her influence over the Intendant. At last came Nemesis; the English were at the gates of Quebec. Not all the influence and efforts of the noble Montcalm could avert the coming disaster, and Quebec fell. With it fell the ascendency of French ways in "Our Lady of the Snows."

After the coming of the English and the partial amalgamation of the two races, there was a steady development of society; but it was along normal lines and was not of a nature to call for remark. It did not tend to any individuality of type; it produced very charming women, but not a typical woman as differing from the representatives of other modern races. This is said of the cities of Canada. There were mutations of fashion and custom and thought and conditions; but these were not individual but rather reflexes of the universal movements of society, save that they were a little modified by the circumstances which were imposed by natural causes upon their progress. It is true that Canadian society was peculiar in its preservation, in certain ways, of the lines distinguishing the Latin and the Teuton; but these lines grew fainter and fainter, and even when most distinctly marked held on the one side or the other nothing that was not of European origin and method. Therefore there remains nothing to be said of the Canadian woman of the cities. There were many individuals doubtless worthy of mention for special graces or attributes, but they were not typical of any peculiar culture. They represented nothing, being but projections of English or French womanhood in its variant aspects. With the coming of the English ends the story of Canadian women as found in the strongholds of femininity.

Still the story is not yet completely told, for there were then and have been ever since outlying posts of womanhood in the Dominion, where there has been preserved a certain individuality of type. The Gallic blood runs almost uncontaminated, giving impulse of Gallic thought and custom, in the veins of those who are called the *habitants*—the French-Canadians of olden type. Their very title is suggestive; it tells of "unreconstructed" alliance to the spirit of their original country, that "pleasant land of France." They are but inhabitants, not citizens in truth of the land over which floats the banner of England; they are French at heart as in origin.

So we can still find in Canada an individual type of womanhood, though to do so we must go somewhat far afield. Even so, the type is not of pronounced peculiarity; it touches and even blends with other types of the Latin countries of Europe and meets at certain points even the lines of our own Teutonic culture. But this latter meeting is brought about by circumstances rather than inherent tendency and is not racial. It is indeed a remnant of the old conditions of pioneer life, which imposes upon Latin as well as Teuton certain fixed and imperative needs, to be met only by equally fixed methods.

If we go into the French-Canadian villages, where alone we can find an individual womanhood in the Dominion, we shall find conditions that do not exist in exactly similar form elsewhere, and which have been brought about by racial modification of accepted circumstances. The woman of the *habitants* is in many respects primitive in the sense of the primitive culture of America while still in its infancy of Caucasian settlement. It is true that with the growth of towns and the development of the railway systems there is constantly coming change in the conditions of the *habitants,* and that it is becoming more and more

needful to extend our pilgrimage to the remoter quarters of the country if we would find the more primitive conditions; but they still exist. Some of these enduring customs are peculiarly connected with womanhood. The use of the loom, for example, is still known in some of the far-away villages of the French-Canadians, and in those villages little is worn that is not the product of home toil. It may be that this is the only quarter of the western hemisphere where the hand loom is not a thing of the past; but here it exists, and with it as its natural accompaniment some of the more old-fashioned traits of womanhood. The wife of the *habitant* is industrious, thrifty, cleanly, and simple in ideas and manners. She is economical to a degree that is rarely found among the Latin races, and she has other virtues that are not common among those of like racial origin. She is moral and religious; indeed, in the latter quality she may be excessive in one way, being entirely under the dominion of her spiritual pastor. But then she has good reason for this filial obedience, for the relations of the French-Canadian bishop or priest with his flock are in all ways commendable. She is fond of innocent gaiety and not averse to adornment of person when this does not conflict with her love of economy; but when, as sometimes happens, the bishop issues a pastoral in which he commands the relinquishment of certain modes of amusement, such as the waltz, or reprehends certain named frivolities of costume, she abandons the forbidden thing with a quiet obedience which may be unmodern in spirit, but which is pleasant to see in its cheerful submission to an authority which she considers as the highest that can be evoked and one which it were sin to despise or disobey.

The wife of the *habitant* has also a virtue which is not in high esteem among her sisters of a higher culture, but

which is still held in respect among the more primitive communities: she is highly prolific. Families of fifteen children are common among the French-Canadians, and the mother of but a paltry half-dozen feels that she has not done her duty to humanity and her country. Early marriages are the rule among the *habitants,* being wisely encouraged by the priests in the interests of morality. It is a sociable race, and the women vie with each other in promoting the innocent gaiety which makes up a large part of their lives. Because of this love for social merriment as well as of their religious feeling, the fêtes of the Church are celebrated in French Canada as nowhere else in northern America, and the industry of the women is tempered by the frequent holidays which call for enjoyment. Their dress is as a rule simple and, in the further outlying communities, which are chiefly referred to here, frequently entirely of homespun material, the fruit of their own labors.

One of the chief traits of the French-Canadians, male and female, is their love of music; yet to the cause of music the women of French Canada have furnished but one noted contribution, Madame Albani, the famous opera singer, who owns birth as one of this people, though hardly as a true *habitante,* in the more limited sense of the word. But music is the greatest passion of the French-Canadians, and the violin holds an honored place in all their communities. It is in the simple pleasure of listening to the music of the violin, or of dancing to its merry strains, that the woman of the *habitants* finds her chief respite from the toils of her daily life.

Such is the most characteristic type of womanhood of the Canada of to-day. It is a good type and a comely; but it is not fitted to endure before the changes which our present culture brings about where it enters. The *habitants*

form the nearest approach to a peasantry, as found in European lands, that this country can show; and peasantry is doomed to extinction, be it sooner or later. In the case of the simple people of French Canada, it would seem that it will be sooner.

In the history of her women, Canada need veil her face before the claims of no other country of the globe. No land has been graced by nobler types, either by birth or adoption, than the Dominion; yet she has failed to produce a racial type, and it may be that her lot is the happier that it is so. It is enough for her that she can point to such daughters, whether of their own wills or by birthright, as Madame de la Peltrie, Mother Marie Guyard, Jeanne Mance, Marguerite de Bourgeoys, and others who labored in the cause of degraded humanity. With such names inscribed upon her banner, we may well forgive her such as the infamous Angélique de Pean and forget the madness that came upon her when Bigot lorded it in Quebec and virtue and honor were looked upon by most of the women of that city as encumbrances to pleasure or ambition. To-day her women worthily sustain the standard which has been left them as a legacy by their noble sisters of the past; so Canada may well be content in this wise, even though she has furnished no leaders in the march of present-day womanhood toward its desired goal.

Chapter IX

The Young Republic

IX

THE YOUNG REPUBLIC

THE final establishment of republican rule in America found the country exhausted of present resources, but full of latent energy and with untold treasures of internal wealth lying ready to its hand when that hand should become sufficiently strong to grasp them. In a social aspect, there was of course little outward change to be noted between the years immediately preceding the actual warfare and those immediately subsequent thereto; but by the cessation of that war and the consequent growth of new national ideas and ideals there were imported new conditions of society that were to find rapid growth—and as rapid decay.

The primary ideal of American republicanism was simplicity. There was talk of this on all sides, and it affected all the prevailing customs of social life. It is true that there were many dissenters, by life if not by theory, from the popular creed; but these dared not open their mouths in scorn, even if they felt impelled so to do. In the eyes of the founders of our nation, republicanism and simplicity were almost interchangeable terms; ornateness of custom, as of dress, was by theory for royal courts and castles, not for the homes or social circles of the sons and daughters of a republic. The practice of our ancestors did not always, even in those first days of enthusiasm, comport

with the theory which they promulgated as the rule of social life, but consistency is not an invariable attribute of humanity.

As a matter of fact, simplicity did predominate; it was even the fashion, and that made it almost universal. More than ever were the days of the early republic the era of the housewife; the distaff was considered, even by most of the ladies themselves, to be the rightful sceptre of womanhood, with no Salic Law to cast it into contempt. The requirements for a housewife of those industrious days were many, and may be judged from an advertisement which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* under date of September 23, 1780:

"Wanted at a Seat about half a day's journey from Philadelphia, on which are good improvements and domestics, A single Woman of unsullied Reputation, an affable, cheerful, active, and amiable Disposition; cleanly, industrious, perfectly qualified to direct and manage the female Concerns of country business, as raising small stock, dairying, marketing, combing, carding, spinning, knitting, sewing, pickling, preserving, etc., and occasionally to instruct two young Ladies in those Branches of Oeconomy, who, with their father, compose the Family. Such a person will be treated with respect and esteem, and meet with every encouragement due to such a character."

Such a person would hardly need "encouragement," one would think, as being a paragon of knowledge and capacity, and one can only wonder that "geometry and the use of the globes" were omitted from the list of her accomplishments as needful. The advertisement is, however, typical of the knowledge which our great-grandmothers looked upon as indispensable to the notable housekeeper

of that day, though it might well appall the most skilful of our housewives of the present.

Because of the predominance of the theory of simplicity in republican circles, there was need of a limited reconstruction of social conditions. The period cannot be said to have been formative, either in aspect or effect, for it showed merely the elevation of certain widely-held ideals over others which had been no less stubbornly maintained; yet that a new social system was founded in those days cannot be successfully denied. The American woman realized that she was standing upon the threshold of an illimitable future, and she also recognized the responsibilities of her position. As she directed her first steps under the new order of things, so would her children and her children's children walk; or so at least she believed and hoped. Therefore it behooved her to take good heed to those first steps, lest they lead to a goal which was not worthy.

It is this new sense of responsibility, added to the sense of dignity which was always strong with the representative colonial woman of the later days, that we see, if we look deep enough, when we turn our gaze upon the young days of the republic in its social aspects and inquire their meaning. That simplicity of manners and customs was the fashion, and as a fashion was frequently carried to absurd lengths, is undoubtedly true; but underneath the fashion lay a creed, and the creed was of high nature. It was with a grave face, but with a brave heart, that the American woman looked forward to the future of the country for which she had suffered so much and therefore loved so well. To her husband in that day and her sons and grandsons in the future were committed the graver issues of the things which were to guide the land in its coming path; but she too, in her different yet contiguous sphere,

had laid upon her a burden of trust, and she would be faithful thereto.

So American womanhood, classing it as a universal entity, was confronted at its first unaided and ungoverned steps by many problems, difficult of solution and of pressing nature. Added to the sense of responsibility, too, was the power of recoil—a power which has been more effectual, both for good and evil, than any other that has ever influenced man. The hold of Old World custom upon the American woman had suddenly been loosed, and it is no cause for wonder if she rebounded to the opposite extreme. She must be freed in every way from European dominance; she must prove herself an American indeed, utterly unruled by European fashion as by English monarch. Only so would she be worthy of her newly gained emancipation. Such, though unexpressed and even perhaps unrecognized by herself, was her theory.

There was another powerfully operative cause in the changes that took place in American society in the period subsequent to the close of the war for independence. There came about for the first time a certain centralization, until then unknown in the colonies. Up to that time there had been several centres of social dominance, each ruling its own territory. Boston—though in lesser strength—New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Williamsburg, Charleston, and other cities which had grown from town-infancy to the higher estate, had been maelstroms of the society for their sections; but the foundation of Washington, though at first its influence was hardly felt, was increasingly influential in forming new conditions. Though the national capital was not founded in the days which we are at the moment considering, in a way its predecessors were equally potent for centralization, and it is most convenient to speak of the whole process as of one place. When the

first president of the republic took up his abode in a recognized capital, there was imported into the republican society the very thing which was most antagonistic to all its proclaimed principles—the atmosphere of a court. It was no matter that the court was not that of a potentate; though not a royal, it was a social court, which took its place as the head of all social functions and aspects. It availed nothing that such a stern republican as Jefferson reprobated all ceremony and insisted upon the extremes of democratic simplicity; the spirit of the court was infused into the social elements of America, and its influence was enormous, even though to this day that influence has been unacknowledged.

Enough of theory, let us look at resultant facts. For the first time one woman filled the eyes of the nation as preeminently the first lady of the land. That this position was so worthily filled was most fortunate for the future of American society, though even that circumstance did not avail to ward off certain evils that followed in the train of centralization. But none of these evils can be laid at the door of Martha Washington, whom all America rightfully delighted to honor. The widow of Colonel Custis won lasting fame when she gave her hand to George Washington, then but a colonel of militia; but, like the mother of the first of Americans, "Lady Washington," as she was affectionately called, possessed qualities that made her worthy of high esteem for her own sake. It will suffice merely to give one picture of her which shows alike the domesticity of her nature and the simplicity of manners which were so prevalent at this time. Mrs. Carrington thus describes her most lasting impression of Mrs. Washington during a visit to Mount Vernon:

"Let us repair to the old lady's room, which is precisely in the style of our good aunt's,—that is to say,

nicely fixed for all sorts of work. On one side sits the chambermaid, with her knitting; on the other, a little colored pet, learning to sew. An old, decent woman is there, with her table and shears, cutting out the negroes' winter clothes, while the good old lady directs them all, incessantly knitting herself. She points out to me several pairs of nice colored stockings and gloves she had just finished, and presents me with a pair half done, which she begs I will finish and wear for her sake."

Upon this picture Bishop Meade thus comments:

"If the wife of General Washington, having her own and his wealth at command, should thus choose to live, how much more the wives and mothers of Virginia with moderate fortunes and numerous children! How often have I seen, added to the above-mentioned scenes of the chamber, the instructions of several sons and daughters going on, the churn, the reel, and other domestic operations all in progress at the same time, and the mistress, too, lying on a sick-bed!"

All this is republican simplicity in its ideal form; but at another time, when Mrs. Washington is with her husband, the chief magistrate of the nation, at the seat of government, Mrs. Warren writes to her:

"Your observation may be true, that many younger and gayer ladies consider your situation as enviable; yet I know not one who by general consent would be more likely to obtain the suffrages of the sex, even were they to canvass at elections for the elevated station, than the lady who now holds the first rank in the United States."

Mrs. Warren is optimistic as to the probable result of such an election as she suggests; but the keynote of the

quotation is sounded, though unintentionally, in the words "holds the first rank in the United States." With her advanced age to give it abetment, Mrs. Washington's admirable simplicity was doubtless preserved intact even in spirit through her occupation of the high position in which, by the grace of her husband's merits, she found herself; but the use of the word "rank" in such connection is ominous, especially in days of such enthusiasm for strait republicanism in all things. The recognition, though not the acknowledgment, of social rank arising from centralization and the spirit of a court was already present in democratic America.

While society was becoming formed and shaped into new moulds in the East, in the West the primitive conditions of settlement existed. Kentucky, the "dark and bloody ground," was the scene of true border warfare with the Indians before, during, and for a time after the War of Independence. While their sisters of the East were living in ease and affluence, the wives and daughters of the hardy pioneers were braving the terrors and perils of a wilderness as threatening as that which met the first white invaders of America. The first white women who stood upon the banks of the Kentucky River were the wife and daughters of Daniel Boone; but of them no legend of heroism is extant. Among their sister pioneers, however, deeds of daring were many. Famous for long were such women as Mrs. Duree, who alone held her house, after her husband had been killed, against the attacks of a band of Indians; Mrs. Whitley, whose leadership rescued a fellow pioneer who had been seized by the savages; Mrs. Merrill, who with her own hand killed with an axe four of a band of Indians that attacked her home and single-handed beat off the whole force; Elizabeth Zane, who at the siege of Fort Henry, when powder was wanted to repel the

attack of the Indians and no man dared go for it beyond the gate, ran the gauntlet to and from her home, some sixty yards from the gate of the fort, and returned in safety with the prize, to be remembered in history as one of the foremost heroines of border warfare; and those noble women of Bryant's Station, who, in the hope that they would not draw the fire of the concealed Indians where a body of men would certainly be slain, walked calmly to the distant spring, filled their buckets as nonchalantly as if no danger existed, and returned unscathed, their coolness causing the Indians to believe that their ambush had not been detected and that it would therefore be a false move to betray its existence.

Such was the spirit of the women who shared in the development of the West. Their part, too, was to hearten and help their husbands in their incessant fight with the wilderness, savage beasts, and savage men; but this was too much a matter of course to call for note. The long rifle of the pioneer has been celebrated in song and story; but not surer, more needed, or more faithful was it than the wife who accompanied him in his explorations and shared his perils and toils. The women of Kentucky in those days, and all who helped the men to push further and further back the boundaries of savagery and extend those of civilization, deserve to be held in lasting remembrance by all who honor American womanhood, even though their qualities were not of those most admired in their sex. They had their place in our national story as well as their softer-reared sisters of the Atlantic coast, and they did their work as well and nobly.

Before returning to the social centre from our excursus into the wilds, it is proper to pause for an instant in the temple of letters and note a tablet on the walls. It is an old saying that "there is nothing new under the sun";

and it may surprise some readers to learn that the feminine preponderance in the fiction of the present, and even the growing tendency to laud precocity in authorship, are not without warrant in the earlier history of our nation's literature. Long ago Hannah Hill, the author of that cheerful tract called *A Legacy for Children: Last Expressions and Dying Words,* wrote and published a book when at the immature age of eleven; and even the present day cannot as yet surpass that piece of absurdity. More significant, however, is the fact that the first American novel was the work of a woman. Susanna Haswell was not of American birth, but she came to this country as a mere child and may fairly be claimed as a product of our soil, at least as far as her literary genius is concerned. In 1786 she published a work called *Victoria,* and, two years later, *The Inquisitor.* She then went to England with her lately married spouse, William Rowson, for a three years' residence; and it was during her absence from the country that she published the most famous of her works, *Charlotte Temple, a Tale of Truth.* It is this latter work that, with our national cheerful disregard for facts, is generally termed the "First American Novel," the existence of its predecessors and the fact of its foreign birth being entirely disregarded. However, the book was in its day a great success, having what was then an enormous sale—twenty-five hundred copies within a few years. While the style is of the most theatrical kind, the characters posing alternately in the front of the stage as they become the speakers, and the language is turgid to excess, the book is not without some merits. It is all impossible enough; but that forms little detriment to popularity even now, and the fact that no man or woman ever talked as talk Mrs. Rowson's characters does not make the work peculiar among its kind. It was published in 1892 in cheap form, but met

with little welcome; yet it remains as a monument in our literature because of its titular position therein, though *Victoria* was the first American novel in point of time. Mrs. Rowson returned to this country immediately after the publication of *Charlotte Temple,* and continued to write —pouring forth a full stream of plays, songs, stories, and even school books—until her death in Boston in 1824.

Let us now return to the whirlpool of society proper, as in those days known. The first presidential mansion, as is well known, was on Market Street, Philadelphia, and thither repaired the diplomats of foreign nations as well as our own statesmen and politicians,—the latter class already threatening to grow to unseemly proportions. Moreover, thither repaired most of the social leaders of their time, and the president's receptions, at which punch and cake were the staple refreshments, soon became at least as distinctly social as political in their aspects and influences. "The coteries of the Lady Presidentess" was the name bestowed by certain disgruntled persons on the frequenters of these functions, and there were murmurs as to lack of republican simplicity. Yet there was in the manner of these receptions little to call forth animadversion from the most uncompromising democrat; and the like functions of Mrs. Adams, less official but more social in character, were almost equally lacking in ornateness.

Still there was much gaiety in the Quaker City while it held its place as the seat of government. "I have not," writes Miss Mary Binney, a belle of this time, "one minute to spare from French, music, balls, and plays. Oh, dear, this dissipation will kill me! for you must know our social tea drinkings of *one or two friends* is an assembly of two or three hundred souls."

The dissipation shocked some of the staider souls; and we find Mrs. Stoddert, in a letter to her niece, quoting her

husband to the effect that "large towns are terrible places for young females." This was the pessimistic view of society which is always to the fore, whatever the existing conditions; but it seems to have had very little warrant at that time. The balls and "parties" brought together many of the leading beauties and wits of the day; and the Duc de Rochefoucauld declared that "in the numerous assemblies of Philadelphia it is impossible to meet with what is called a plain woman." This assertion was somewhat hyperbolical; but among the famous Philadelphia beauties were Miss Sallie McKean, Mrs. William Bingham, Mrs. Samuel Blodgett, Mrs. James Allen and her daughters, and others hardly less notable; while from New York—by birth if not by actual residence—came such as Mrs. Ralph Izard and Mrs. Elbridge Gerry, and from further afield, Mrs. John Jay, who was once, while in Paris, mistaken by a French audience for the reigning queen, Marie Antoinette, and had no reason to be overflattered by the mistake, if we are to judge from the best portraits of the two beautiful women.

In the dress, as in the manners of the social leaders of that day there was but little of "republican simplicity." Everything was perforce imported from Europe, as America had no manufactures of dress stuffs, or anything else; and European fashions therefore avenged the defeat of English arms by their arbitrary rule, though they were a trifle late in their appearance after they had been set in their native countries. The words of Mrs. Stoddert upon her *coiffure* are of interest in this connection:

"Instead of a wig," writes the lady in question, "I have a bando, which suits me much better. I had it in contemplation to get a wig, but I have got what I like much better for myself. It is called a bando. I think the former best for those who dress in a different style from

myself, but the latter suits me best. I heard the ladies with whom I was in company last night say that the fashionable manner of dressing the hair was more like the Indians—the hair without powder—and looked sleek and hung down the forehead in strings. Mine will do that to a nicety. I observe powder is scarcely worn, only, I believe, by those who are gray—too much so to go without powder, I mean. How those ladies in the Indian fashion dress their hair behind I cannot say; but those out of that fashion that I have seen, and who do not wear wigs, have six or eight curls on their neck, and turn up the rest and curl the ends, which I think looks very pretty when well done."

John Adams, as all readers of our history know, believed, or affected to believe, that Washington possessed dangerously aristocratic tendencies which threatened to overthrow the most cherished of the new democratic ideals; and Senator Maclay, who was also inimical to the president, presumed on one occasion to go to a New Year's reception at the government house "in top boots and my worst clothes." "Anti-republican and dangerous precedents" were the epithets applied by Mr. Adams to the "birthnight ball" offered by the people of Philadelphia to General Washington, and declined as a personal compliment by the president of the United States,—the distinction may seem somewhat fine but was thus made at the time,—and so the social warfare went on. That the adherents of the more primitive methods were doomed to defeat it needed no extraordinary powers of vaticination to discern; but, though there was much talk of "the precedent of court manners at the Capital," no one seems to have understood the very evident fact that the centralization of society necessarily effected by the location of the government was sure to bring about the court atmosphere.

While Washington governed from Philadelphia, that city was as much a social centre as Paris or London, though of lesser sphere of influence.

The seat of government was moved, in the autumn of 1800, to the newly-risen town of Washington; and society for a while found itself compelled to face difficulties innumerable in its struggle for European customs as its established methods. Not only was there much hardship, incidental to the newness of the capital, to be undergone, but the inauguration of Thomas Jefferson, in the spring of 1801 as the third president, brought about some retrogression in the onward march of the social system. Jefferson affected a love for the extremes of "democratic simplicity," and he carried this to the verge of boorishness in some respects, giving mortal offence at times to foreign diplomats and native statesmen by his disregard for the amenities of courtly custom. Himself a polished gentleman, as a politician, Jefferson was something of the demagogue in such matters as social customs when these seemed of national import, and he was determined that the White House should in no way resemble the court of any European monarch, believing that thus he best pleased the people of the United States. So the first aspect of the White House was that of ruggedness, since its occupation by the testy John Adams and his family was of duration too short to be noted; and even Mrs. Adams, in her acceptance of her husband's theories, which, however, were not so radical, in practice at least, as those of his successor, was accused of hanging her drying clothes in the East Room of the presidential mansion.

The Jefferson era at the White House was lacking not only in social amenities but in the presence of female influence to soften its roughnesses. The daughters of the president, Mrs. Randolph and Mrs. Eppes, were seldom

with him during his eight years of tenancy, though both their husbands were members of Congress during that period. The two ladies were together at the White House for only a short visit, and individually they came rarely to visit their father and never took up their residence with him. Mrs. Randolph had a large family which needed attention, and Mrs. Eppes was for long in delicate health, and finally died in 1803, thereby causing her father the greatest grief of his life. Both were accomplished and handsome women, and they might, by their presence at the centre of government, have removed some of the stigma of discourtesy, rather than mere uncourtliness, that lay upon it. Jefferson, in his love for extremes, abolished all presidential receptions, except on New Year's Day and the Fourth of July, and the weekly levees which had been such a pleasant feature heretofore were sternly repressed as "undemocratic." So that, in its highest expressions, society had a parlous time during the two Jeffersonian administrations.

There were many private and unofficial functions, of course; and a number of society leaders were so daring as to call *en masse* upon the president upon the regular day for the weekly levee when these were first abandoned; but the reception which they met at his hands was so grim in its courtesy that the experiment was not repeated. Thenceforth, society settled down to enjoy itself as best it might without official sanction and encouragement; and it succeeded most admirably. There was even a flavor of officialdom to give its functions zest; for, if Mr. Jefferson refused to lend his presidential countenance to frivolities, his Secretary of State, Mr. Madison, was of another stamp, and Mrs. Madison, the ever-famous "Dolly," was a woman well calculated to lead society in its rapid march. Here is a picture of her from the pen of Dr. Mitchill, in

turn representative and senator from New York: "She has a fine person and a most engaging countenance, which pleases, not so much from mere symmetry or complexion, as from expression. Her smile, her conversation, and her manners are so engaging that it is no wonder that such a young widow, with her fine blue eyes and large share of animation, should be indeed a Queen of Hearts."

Dolly Madison was the representative leader of American society of that day. Born a Quaker and brought up as a member of that sect, her demureness was of the surface, though it lasted her through the days of her union with James Todd, a Friend like herself. At his death, however, the lady began to show some signs of restlessness under the strait rules of her sect; and her marriage to James Madison emancipated her from the dominance of Quaker simplicity; gladly shaking off her chains, she made it her pleasant duty to be a leading member of the society of highest rank in America. When official circles moved to Washington and her husband a little later assumed the office of Secretary of State, Mrs. Madison, given her opportunity by the disregard for such matters on the part of the president, determined to make her husband's house the centre of Washington society, and she succeeded in this to admiration. There was no affectation of "republican simplicity" in her functions; they were admittedly as ornate as was possible under the circumstances, and doubtless they had their effect in promoting her husband to the office of chief executive of the nation. When this time came there was an end of austerity at the White House. All the functions of a court that were convenient to the circumstances of the position were resumed from the Philadelphia days, and more added thereto; and society, as found in its most representative aspect, was now fairly embarked upon its career. Under

the Madison rule the White House became indeed the centre and director of the social orbit, as of the political.

In official circles at least, the slogan of "republican simplicity" was silent forever. However desirable such a thing might still seem to some in theory, in practice it was almost universally acknowledged to be impossible. Unless bachelorhood were made a necessary qualification for a president, there must frequently and even generally be in the country a woman who by common consent as by the publicity and responsibilities of her position must be the leading lady of the land and in so much the recognized queen of society, having her court and courtiers; and simplicity could not accompany such conditions. Dolly Madison hated the Democrats, and she had the satisfaction, even if she did not know her full triumph, of giving the death-blow to some of their most cherished and most impracticable theories in those days of experiment.

But Mrs. Madison had in her even better stuff than that required satisfactorily to fulfil the onerous calls of her social position. She dearly loved her husband; and when the storm of war again burst over the land, she supported and encouraged him in noble manner. Indeed, she presents a far more heroic picture than does the president, whose conduct at the battle of Bladensburg and during his wanderings after the flight from Washington, was not that for which we might look from one whose title was that of Commander-in-Chief of the forces of the United States. When Washington was threatened, Mrs. Madison gave a fine example of cheerful bravery; and when the peril grew to its highest point we find her thus writing to her sister: "Will you believe it, my sister, we have had a battle or skirmish near Bladensburg, and I am still here within sound of the cannon! Mr. Madison comes not. May God protect him! Two messengers, covered with dust, come

to bid me fly; but I wait for him. . . . Our kind friend, Mr. Carroll, has come to hasten my departure, and is in very bad humor with me because I insist on waiting until the large picture of General Washington is secured, and it requires to be unscrewed from the wall."

It was probably this latter incident which gave rise to a venerable legend as to "Dolly Madison and the Constitution"; but the truth is sufficient to make her name honored. At last she was compelled to fly without her husband; and it is related that at the house where she paused for rest, the "lady" there residing came to the steps and called out: "Mrs. Madison, if that's you, come down and go out! Your husband has got mine out fighting, and, damn you, you shan't stay in my house!" To such straits was fallen "the first lady of the land"; and this profane virago simply, if somewhat coarsely, expressed a sentiment that was not confined to her or to a thousand like her.

The wanderings of the Madisons when they became reunited have passed into general history and need not here be recalled. Finally they returned to ruined Washington and watched it rise again from its ashes, British vandalism being in this instance productive of final good; for the new city was a vast improvement over the old one, which had been but tentative at the best. After the expiration of Mr. Madison's second term of office the pair took up their residence at Montpelier, and there lived almost in retirement until their deaths. Mrs. Madison survived her husband thirteen years; but she never survived the love which she gave him and which shows even more beautiful than their mutual emotion when we remember that these were middle-aged people when they were married. Even when they were old, long after their retirement into private life, we find the wife writing to her husband, during one of his few and brief absences from her, a letter which

begins: "My Beloved, I trust in God that you are well again, as your letters assure me you are," and ends, "May angels guard thee, my best friend!"

Before her death, Mrs. Madison finally turned from the frivolities of society, was baptized and confirmed by the Bishop of Maryland, and declared that "There is nothing in this world really worth caring for." She did not include her love for her husband among the "things of this world"; and doubtless she spoke of the rest from full knowledge and with true judgment. She had in her nature elements which under stress showed high and noble; but probably she will be best remembered as the representative woman of American society during the formative period of the republic.

There is another name of that day well worthy of being singled out, even among so many worthy compeers, as representative of American womanhood in some of its noblest expressions. Though, from reasons born of the political mutations of that time and of personal relationship, she was never famous in society, or even in her time, Theodosia Burr was one of the noblest, as of the most accomplished, women of her brief day. If she was unfortunate in her parentage, she at least did not think so; for never was love between parent and child more beautiful than that which existed between Aaron Burr, the ostracized "traitor," and the lovely woman who called him father. This is no place for a defence of Burr; but in glancing at his family life we must lay aside political prejudice and see him as far as we may through the eyes of his daughter. That daughter was accomplished and intelligent beyond the scope of most men as well as women of her day. Her education lacked indeed the Christian element which is so beautiful in womanhood; but otherwise it might have been pronounced sufficient by the most

exigent of critics. Moreover, she was a woman of the most delicate sensibilities, the tenderest affections. When her father was persecuted, as she at least deemed it, she clung to him with a fidelity that was as touching as it was deserved; for, whatever Burr may have been to others, to his daughters he was the most loving and considerate of parents. When he fell into disgrace Theodosia made strenuous efforts in his behalf; and her letter on the subject to Mrs. Madison is a model of pathetic and yet dignified entreaty for justice.

Her whole life was full of romance. The shadow of her father's ostracism hung over her during her last years, and though she had before his fall been married to Joseph Alston, of South Carolina, she was always the daughter rather than the wife, perhaps even than the mother, though her grief at the death of her only child was terrible. This sad event occurred just after the return of Burr from his long exile, and the daughter's joy was naturally forgotten in the sorrow of the mother, even though she may have held the gain greater than the loss. Others have been models of wives and mothers; but Theodosia, though in both those characters admirable beyond cavil, stands rather as the representative American daughter. Her father was her deity, her best self, her whole good; "If the worst comes to the worst," she wrote to him when he was in exile, "I will leave *everything* to suffer with you." She was not driven to such sacrifice; yet the return of that beloved father to his country, if not to his rights, came too late for her. Broken down by the death of her child, she resolved to go by sea from her Southern home to New York to join her father, who alone, she thought, could give her comfort in her grief; but, true to the sad romance that surrounded her life, the little vessel on which she sailed was never heard from after leaving

port. How Theodosia met her fate is unknown; but we may be sure that it was with fortitude and calmness, whatever guise that fate may have worn.

Theodosia Burr, for thus, rather than as Theodosia Alston, will she always be known, and Dorothy Madison stand out prominently as divergent types of the highest development of the women of their day; and we can hold them to have been fairly, if somewhat exaggeratedly representative of American womanhood at that period. The close of the War of 1812, like that of the Revolution, marked an era in the history of the women of America, even though the line of demarcation was not drawn with sufficient sharpness of definition to be clear to the sight. From 1785 to 1812 American society, using the word in its broadest sense, was in a condition of formation; at the end of that period it began to take on coherence and individuality in certain directions, at the same time that it became less individual in others. The close of that era found American womanhood ready for onward march. It had tried its strength in various ways, and now it knew its powers. While in its inherent qualities it was much the same as it had been twenty years before, there had arisen new conditions, mostly of internal origin, to which it must adapt itself. This was less the fact with the rural woman-life than with the urban; but it is the latter which stands out most prominently when we look back upon the past and which must be accepted as generally representative. The women of Kentucky, aiding their stalwart husbands in reclaiming the ground from the wilderness and in holding it against Indian attack, the farmer's wife, taking upon herself more than the moiety of the daily toil and rearing her children in the simple ways and faith of her fathers, even the undermost strata of the cities, that unconsidered but potent element in social history,—all these

were almost unaffected by the things which made for evolution among their sisters of higher station and easier lives. It is to these latter that we must cling in our search for the true history of the women of our land in times of peace, though when strife filled the country with need for strength their praise was shared by their humbler compeers.

Into American society had been introduced an element which had for a time disappeared, but only to reappear in altered but not less effective form,—the element of aristocracy. The old order had indeed faded; but a new one had leaped into its place, and it was one that was quite as powerful for good and evil as was its predecessor. A country without an aristocracy, acknowledged or merely accepted, is an impossibility, however dear to republican ideas; and the birth of the new aristocracy in America was as sure as if there had been but a change of kings when allegiance to George III. was cast off. Not the true republicanism of Washington—not the affected democracy of Jefferson—could avert its coming; it was inevitable. It remained to be seen if it would be accepted in best manner and made an influence for good rather than for evil; and this, though they did not recognize the fact, was the gravest problem that confronted American women, in their social aspect, when they once more took up the pursuits of peace.

Chapter X

The Growth of the Nation

X

THE GROWTH OF THE NATION

"IT is odd enough," wrote Daniel Webster about 1830, "that the consequences of this dispute in the social and fashionable world are producing great political effects and may very probably determine who shall be successor to the present Chief Magistrate." These were ominous words; and they show, as nothing could better show, the power into which had come that which is generically termed "Society." So strong had grown its influence, so firm its hold upon the national *zeitgeist,* that it could, at least by mediate means, even dictate the nomination and consequent election of a specific candidate for the highest honor within the gift of the nation. Powerful indeed had grown the once feeble hands of the American woman.

The dispute to which Webster referred was so famous in its day and productive of such notable results upon the general history of our country that, while its heroine hardly comes within the scope of this work as being a representative American woman, it merits place here. When Andrew Jackson was inaugurated President of the United States he appointed to a seat in his cabinet, with the dignities of Secretary of War, General Eaton, a life-long friend. Unfortunately, General Eaton had married a beautiful and attractive but lowborn woman, Margaret O'Neill by maiden name and the widow of one Timberlake.

Her father had been a tavern-keeper, and it was thought that his daughter had imbibed too liberal notions during her residence under the paternal roof. So, those days being more particular in such matters than others which have succeeded them, Peggy O'Neill, as she was called endearingly or contemptuously, as the speaker happened to be friend or foe, was distinctly *persona non grata* to the society of the capital. It declined to recognize her as one of its members; Mrs. Calhoun, wife of the vice-president, openly refused to associate with Mrs. Eaton, and Calhoun, on being appealed to, declared himself powerless to interfere, as "the quarrels of women, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, admitted of neither inquiry or explanation." Certain bachelors among the diplomatic corps, on the other hand, were delighted to honor the fair Peggy, and the affair soon developed from a skirmish into a war. The climax was reached when Mrs. Huygens, wife of the minister from Holland, on finding herself placed next to Mrs. Eaton at dinner, turned and swept from the room on the arm of her husband.

President Jackson, always combative, entered into the affair with his usual zest. He was within an ace of demanding Huygens's recall for the affront put upon Mrs. Eaton; and, though he did not carry his enthusiasm quite thus far, he espoused the cause of the lady with most militant zeal. The contest continued to rage; the cabinet was styled the "Petticoat Cabinet," and Mrs. Eaton was far-famed as Bellona, the Goddess of War. There was no surrender on either side; and at last came the state of affairs which Webster had prophetically foretold. For Mr. Van Buren, always a staunch supporter of Jackson in all ways, had warmly adopted the cause of Mrs. Eaton as his own. This lost him the position of minister to England, since Congress, with Calhoun as

chairman casting the deciding vote, refused to ratify the nomination; but it gained him the presidency,—which was the fulfilment of Webster's prophecy,—as Jackson practically had the power to appoint his successor, and there can be no doubt that Mr. Van Buren's countenance and aid in the social war influenced him in his choice quite as much as, and probably far more than, the recollection of his secretary's political services to him during his campaign and term of office. So that the forces of the fair Peggy triumphed at last, though she herself gained no victory. Mr. Van Buren appointed General Eaton as Governor of Florida and, later, Minister to the Court of Madrid, and Washington society knew its apple of discord no more.

There may have been instances before this time, there certainly have been many since, when the decision of our chief legislature was influenced by the charms of a woman; but the case of Peggy O'Neill and Martin Van Buren stands as the unique instance of the selection of the president of the United States resulting from a purely feminine cause. Not only is the incident thus singular, but it is equally suggestive; it speaks trumpet-tongued of the power which had by that time been won by the social element at the national court and it illustrates the changes which had come into American society as exemplified in its highest and most typical circles.

Chronology has been neglected in order to give prominence to an instance so illustrative of the development of the power of society during the period which is now under consideration; but let us return to find the causal influences which led to such result. When the War of 1812 came to its unsatisfactory and indecisive end the city of Washington resumed its sway among social circles, and this time held its sceptre with firmer grasp. Thither flocked most of the aspirants for social fame. Not that in

Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other growing cities there were not women whose repute was equal to that of most of the individual leaders of Washington society, but that the latter was invested in its mass with a dignity which was wanting in unofficial circles. It was the court society of the country and thus held as representative. It was composed of concentric circles, centring in the White House and thence extending, through the wives and daughters of cabinet officials and foreign ministers, to those who hung upon the outer border and peered wistfully through the crowd for a glimpse of the sacred inner precincts. The war, though marking a period in the history of womanhood in our country, had been but an interlude in the chronicle of society, and the latter had but gathered strength and zest during its period of enforced rest.

In 1825, Mrs. Jackson, the wife of the hero of New Orleans,—whose own place in Washington society was at first a little precarious because of some irregularity in her marriage, till the noble character of the woman silenced her detractors,—thus wrote to Mrs. Kingsley of Nashville, giving her first impressions of the capital:

"To tell you of this city, I would not do justice to the subject. The extravagance is in dressing, and running to parties; but I must say they regard the Sabbath, and attend preaching, for there are churches of every denomination and able ministers of the Gospel. . . . Oh, my dear friend, how shall I get through this bustle? There are not less than from fifty to one hundred persons calling in a day. . . . Don't be afraid of my giving way to those vain things. The Apostle says, I can do all things in Christ, who strengtheneth me. The play-actors sent me a letter requesting my countenance to them. No. A ticket to balls and parties. No, not one. Two dinings;

several times to drink tea. Indeed, Mr. Jackson encourages me in my course."

It does not seem to have occurred to the simple piety of the writer that attendance at church may have been as much the result of fashion as of religion; but the more charitable view may be the correct one, as those were days of greater devoutness than the present, and even society maintained some of the rigid rules of old Puritan times. The little picture drawn by Mrs. Jackson is suggestive both of the social whirl of the capital and the simple ways of her who but for her untimely death might later have ruled as titular queen of the social circle. Mrs. Jackson was indeed one who might stand as a representative of much that is best in American womanhood of that day or any day. She was domestic and retiring, but by no means illiterate, as she was falsely said to be when the political fight raged high, and she was a woman, as her letters show, of the most exemplary piety and resolution in the right. Had she inhabited the White House as its mistress she might have injected anew into Washington society a tone which was beginning to be less and less dominant as time went on.

It was about the beginning of the period chosen for the subject of this chapter, the period reaching from the close of the War of 1812 to 1850, that American society, as represented in the upper classes of the womanhood of America, began to be conventional according to European standards. There were still, and continued to be, many individuals of note; but there was very little individuality in the mass. In dress, in manners, in customs, and even in thought, there was little to distinguish the American woman of the higher rank from her European sister. The birth of a national aristocracy had done its invariable work, and importation of foreign ideals and ideas had

completed that work and given it direction. Certain traits, racial and national, were visible in most of the daughters of America and differentiated them from their European compeers; but they were traits which did not affect society in the mass and which were therefore individual and not social. Domesticity still held sway in the majority of American circles; the American woman was still preëminently the home goddess and the home ruler, and refused to abdicate her crown even at the call of fashion; but it must be acknowledged that she wore that crown less easily and comfortably than in earlier days. There was fast dawning the day of artificiality in the things of existence, the day when the shadow should seem greater than the substance, when the queen of the home should degenerate into the queen of the revel. There was needed some cataclysm to rescue American womanhood from the peril which she was approaching; and it was well for her that that cataclysm came at need, however terrible it may have been in the coming.

Yet even in those days the social world did not represent all that was best in American womanhood or even all that was most noteworthy. Therein alone, it is true, were to be found those whose individuality became famous; but in other fields there labored many American women who were unknown to all but those of their immediate environment, and yet whose work was of national importance. Steadily, even while the butterflies of society danced at rout and revel in the East, the western frontiers were being pushed further and further toward the great ocean that had crept round the feet of Balboa, first of white men to stand upon its shores. Kentucky was no longer "the West"; it had sent a president in Jackson, a great senator in Clay, and it was recognized as a sister state even by the proudest of its eastern fellows. But beyond the

Mississippi still stretched a country which was practically a *terra incognita,* and which still awaited reclamation from the rule of the savage and the wild beast. Into this waiting region strode many a determined explorer with axe and rifle, bent on winning a home from the grasp of the wilderness; and with him went his wife to give grace to the home when it should be won and "make the wilderness blossom like a rose." They were survivals, these women, of the primitive type of American womanhood: strong, grave of countenance and bearing, caring little for pleasure or recreation, putting duty before all things in their lives as in their esteem, almost masculine in determination and courage. To their hands the rifle was more familiar than the distaff, for upon them often depended the safety of home and children when their husbands were afield or slain; yet they were feminine in many ways of the best and fitted to become the mothers of a sturdy race of warriors and tillers of the soil.

There is no record of any individual heroines among these women of the pioneers of western civilization, unless it be of purely local limit, nor do we even know much of the story of these women in the mass. We hear no little of the sufferings, privations, and perils of the men who beat back the Indian from his hunting grounds, chased the grizzly bear to his lair in the Rocky Mountains, and turned barren prairie into fruitful field; but of their wives and daughters, who bore the larger share of those privations and suffered more terror in those perils, we are given no record save in the most general terms. Perhaps the chroniclers who tell in terms of admiration of the endurance and courage of the pioneers and forget to mention those of their wives unconsciously pay the latter, and womanhood through them, the greatest of homage, in taking such qualities for granted in women and, hence, too natural to call

for record. However this may be, we know, from acquaintance with the general facts, that with the ever-encroaching frontier of our country's western limit of habitation there always advanced the foot of woman, braving all perils in her love for her husband, her children, and her home.

It was the presence of this gallant band, as well as their courage and endurance, which assures us of one of the most predominant traits of the most distinctive American womanhood in those days. That trait is the love of home. It was to seek a home, a habitation and spot of ground that should be their very own, that the pioneer and his wife dared the perils of the wilderness; and in this search the wife was at least as instrumental as the husband. To have a home was the ambition of every American woman of those times; and, if she could not compass this by ordinary methods, she had recourse to extraordinary ones. If she could not find a home among the habitations of her fellows, if her good man could not give to her this one desire of her heart, then she urged her husband forth into the barren fields of the unknown West, where danger and death might await them, but where at least there was promise of the home,—the Mecca of her every wish.

Toward the end of the period included in this chapter there occurred another westward movement which happily is not entirely relative to the story of American womanhood, and yet must receive mention here. The credulous followers of John Smith, the Mormon, as they are conveniently though incorrectly styled in general terminology, driven from their abodes among the more civilized of their race, sought asylum on the shores of the Great Salt Lake and there built a city to be their abiding place for ever. Somewhat later the Mormon creed boldly avowed its adherence to the theory of polygamy, in practice only at first and then in precept as well, and thus revived, even

though within narrow limits, one of the oldest and furthest removed conditions that had ever environed womanhood. That such a theory should prove attractive to any woman seems to most of us a thing in itself wonderful, that it did thus prove attractive to many is a matter of history. It is true that the majority of recruits to the harems—the word is as correct as convenient—of the Mormons came from the older countries of the eastern shores of the Atlantic: Sweden sent many women to Salt Lake City, and even England furnished her quota, while the Latin countries, probably because of the prevalence of the Catholic faith in their borders, the influence of that faith being in all ways antagonistic to Mormon theories and arguments, lost but few of their daughters to the Mormon Minotaur. With these accessions to the seraglios of the Utah settlement we are less concerned; but many an American woman, by birth and rearing a child of our own land, turned from her ancient traditions to become the "wife" of a Mormon elder. Those who look upon the Mormon practice of polygamy as immoral are narrow and prejudiced, for morality is always a thing of convention and agreement; but that it was a blot upon our civilization may be admitted without cavil. At one time it became even an actual threat to the best interests of our social structure; it promised to engulf in its Charybdis some of the elements of our society which we could ill spare and to make itself felt as an influence in places where it dared not openly raise its head. Legislation—whether justifiable by the spirit of our commonwealth, or otherwise, is legitimate matter of dispute—at length intervened to banish all fear of Mormon influence and to abolish the practices which were most reprobated, and now Mormonism is shorn of its most distinctive feature and that which lent itself most readily to the cause of proselytism.

However we may condemn the tenets and practices of Mormonism, it must be admitted that the most representative women of the Mormons, in the heyday of Mormon power, were thrifty, industrious, economical, and notable workers. Moreover, though it is generally thought that among the disciples of Joseph Smith—to whose door, however, the practice of polygamy cannot be laid, for that was an addendum to the faith made by Brigham Young—women were held in slight esteem, an idea generally correct as to the mass, there were many instances of Mormon women of influence and power in the councils of the men. The adoption of polygamy as part of the creed was largely the work, if not the inspiration, of a woman who was "sealed" to Brigham Young; and the practice would never have grown to any strength, as it had many opponents among the men, had it not received the approbation and welcome of the women. Its adoption caused more than one schism in the Church of the Latter-day Saints, as the Mormons pompously style themselves, but the schismatics never received the support of more than a few of the women of the "peculiar people," and it may be broadly stated that the revival of polygamy among a civilized people was at least as much the work of women as of men.

Mormonism is doomed as a faith; but its existence will always be felt in national results. Even so limited a movement as this, when it touches matters of descent, must ever leave its traces, and the very breaking-up of such a community will have its effect of disseminating impure sources among the fountains of our nation. In this instance, woman, who has done so much for America, has brought harm to her.

As the eighteenth century approached its middle age, society in America grew more and more distinguished and

less and less distinctive. It had long since lost all traces of provincialism; it was a power in itself with its glamor of aristocracy, and it even had its traditions of rank, which were not unrecognized by foreign social powers. In the earliest days of the century, on Christmas Eve, 1803, Elizabeth Patterson, of Baltimore, had been married to Jérôme Bonaparte; and, though the marriage was unrecognized by the all powerful Emperor Napoleon and was thus made practically invalid, it was perfectly legitimate and noteworthy. Though Napoleon, because of the exigencies of his peculiar position, forced Jérôme to renounce his young bride and marry as became his station, he himself treated Miss Patterson with consideration and even generosity, his liberality to her in the matter of a pension enabling her to make the famous retort, when Jérôme offered to provide for her after his marriage, that she "preferred being sheltered under the wing of an eagle to being suspended from the bill of a goose." She never bore any rancor to Napoleon for his actions toward her, though she strove with all her might to win her rights.

Some fifteen years later the same city of Baltimore, or, more correctly, a place contiguous to that city, now known, from its once residents, as Catonsville, gave to society the four Caton sisters, celebrated at home and abroad by the name, conferred by English admirers, of the "American Graces." They were the granddaughters of Charles Carroll of Carrollton and daughters of Richard Caton, and three of them respectively married, in two cases after prior matrimonial alliances, the Marquis of Wellesley, eldest brother of the Duke of Wellington and himself a distinguished Governor-general of India and, later, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; the Marquis of Carmarthen, eldest son and finally successor of the Duke of Leeds; and Baron Stafford. These were "great matches" for the daughters of a

provincial town; and it is a little singular that Louisa Caton, who became the sister-in-law of Elizabeth Bonaparte by her first marriage to William Patterson, should afterward become allied to the family of the man, in the Duke of Wellington, who was most instrumental in overthrowing the fortunes of the family to which Miss Patterson had allied herself by her marriage, and Baltimore be thus connected in its traditions with the respective leaders in the most decisive battle the modern world has ever known.

Though America was spared the adoption of the notable extravagances of European fashions, yet everywhere, in every aspect, were to be seen European conditions of society. Even the type of American woman, preserved till now in certain peculiarities of mental attitude, began to fail. There remained many individual representatives of that type, and these among our most aristocratic society; but in the mass it was not observable. To do away with such type, to lose all distinctiveness of racial attitude, was fast becoming the aim of the American society woman. This was well enough when it had to do with graces of bearing and amenities of intercourse; but it lent itself to affectations and follies as well. The wife and the mother were no longer the representative American women; the homely and the home-giving chrysalis had been cast aside, and the lustrous but useless butterfly was spreading its wings for flight. Still a country of homes in its more widely spread conditions, this was not the aspect assumed by America when it was gazed upon by foreign eyes, for these saw first the most prominent rather than the deeper facts. The capital was fast becoming more of social than of political importance, and the wives and daughters of the senators and representatives in Congress assembled at least thought of themselves, even if they were not generally considered, as being of as much importance in the

march of the nation as were their husbands and fathers. The vision of the mothers of the republic, as they looked forward upon the path which they hoped to see their daughters tread as following in their own footsteps, had not been brought to pass. Not that there was failure of the best among American womanhood; taking it in the mass, it was pure and high and true. But it was wrongly directed to bring forth its best potencies, at least in its most representative, though fortunately not most characteristic, expressions; it had taken the wrong turning.

This was so only of the expression, not of the nature. American womanhood still stood for all the best of its kind. Removed from the chief temptations offered by Old World conditions, it knew no taint, felt no canker at its heart. Its head was often in the wrong, but its heart never. The importation of European customs and manners, as well as of European fashions, had worked its will upon the outward bearing of the American woman; but European morals, then at a low ebb in all the Latin countries and not too high in England herself, had not yet succeeded in gaining foothold among our women. Moreover, except among the extreme devotees of the fashionable world, domesticity was still the keynote of the life of the American woman. Here is the testimony to this effect born by Fenimore Cooper, a writer whose eyes were never closed to the follies and foibles of his nation and whose pen was rather given to blame than praise:

"Foreigners are apt to say that we children of this western world do not submit to the tender emotions with the same self-abandonment as those who are born nearer to the rising sun; that our hearts are as cold and selfish as our manners; and that we live more for the lower and grovelling passions than for sentiment and the affections.

Most sincerely do we wish that every charge which European jealousy and European superciliousness have brought against the American character was as false as this. That the people of this country are more restrained in the exhibition of all their emotions than those across the great waters we believe; but that the last *feel* the most we shall be very unwilling to allow. Most of all shall we deny that the female form contains hearts more true to all its affections, spirits more devoted to the interests of its earthly head, or an identity of existence more perfect than those with which the American wife clings to her husband. She is literally 'bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.' It is seldom that her wishes cross the limits of the domestic circle, which to her is earth itself and all that it contains which is most desirable. Her husband and children compose her little world, and beyond them and their sympathies it is rare indeed that her truant affections ever wish to stray. A part of this concentration of the American wife's existence in these domestic interests is doubtless owing to the simplicity of American life and the absence of temptation. Still, so devoted is the female heart, so true to its impulses, and so little apt to wander from house-feelings and home-duties, that the imputation to which there is allusion is just that of all others to which the wives of the Republic ought not to be subject."

This is the testimony of a man who knew his people and his time in some ways better than any other American novelist and who did not hesitate to use the cautery when he thought its application desirable. Therefore it is to be regarded as just and accurate, the more so that it contains admission of interior facts concerning which "European jealousy and European superciliousness" could find ground for blame that could not be termed carping.

It was of that which is now openly and then secretly termed "the middle class" that Cooper was chiefly speaking, however, though most of his words were applicable to all classes of American society. One may doubt the actuality of the "simplicity of American life" in its more prominent expressions at that time, and the "absence of temptation," in the sense in which our author means the phrase, does not appear, since the conditions which made for such temptation in European society were to be found in that of America; but morals were then under the care of the most efficient guardian which they can know,—public opinion. Indeed, in such matters it was rather the day of prudery in America. The American woman was justly proud of her virtue, was indeed something of a catharist; and she would not tolerate the smallest departure from the rigid code which she set as the unimpeachable law in these matters. If she was extreme in this wise, at least the extremity was carried in the right direction; and American society, whatever its follies, was pure.

Nor were there wanting many of those in high places to fulfil the statements of Cooper concerning the domesticity of the American wife. In 1824, Mrs. Seaton wrote of Mrs. John C. Calhoun: "You could not fail to love and appreciate, as I do, her charming qualities: a devoted mother, a tender wife, industrious, cheerful, intelligent, with the most perfectly equable temper." Mrs. Crawford, wife of the secretary of war during Monroe's administration, openly regretted that her husband had entered public life, since the duties of the position would make inroads upon the domesticity which she valued as the dearest thing in her existence. On the other hand, these simpler tastes among so many of the higher ladies of the land did not produce lack of culture. John Randolph was

no lover of women, and no believer in their entrance into the domain of politics. When on one occasion they crowded the floor as well as the gallery of the Senate to hear him pour forth the rich flood of his eloquence, and he was annoyed by some whisper, he suddenly paused in his speech, pointed his long index finger at the gallery, and demanded: "Mr. Speaker, what, pray, are all these women doing here, so out of place in this arena? Sir, they had much better be at home attending to their knitting!" Yet even John Randolph, misogynist as he was, thus wrote in 1833 to Edward Livingstone concerning the latter's acceptance of the position of minister to France: "In Mrs. Livingstone, to whom present my warmest respects, you have a most able coadjutor. *Dowdies,* dowdies won't do for European courts, Paris especially. There and at London the character of the minister's wife is almost as important as his own. It is the very place for her. There she would dazzle and charm, and surely the salons of Paris must have far greater attractions for her than the yahoos of Washington."

The last words show Randolph's estimate of Washington society in the mass; but never was there a more prejudiced or bitterer man than he of Roanoke, and his general verdict must not be implicitly accepted.

In 1836 there occurred at the capital an event which was in itself of note, as being contrary to the theories of the day, and which is yet more noteworthy as the first instance in America of a practice which in our day has become common,—the entrance of a woman into journalism. Mrs. Anne Royall founded a paper in the capital, giving it the somewhat suggestive name of the *Huntress,* and dedicated it chiefly to the promulgation of fashionable news. Thus Mrs. Royall not only became the mother of American women journalists, but absolutely the pioneer

of that long line of society reporters who were to become in later days such an accepted and welcomed feature of the social world. The office of the *Huntress* was on Capitol Hill, and the paper was published every Saturday; it was eagerly welcomed by society, which up to that time had found its doings sadly neglected in the columns of the journals. Finding the innovation received with a warmth which left no doubt of its popularity, it was adopted by Nathaniel Parker Willis in his letters to the New York *Mirror,* and by James Gordon Bennett in his correspondence to the *Courier;* but Mrs. Royall had the honor, if honor it be, of leading the new movement in journalism. Sooth to say, Mrs. Royall was more progressive than talented in such matters; her pen pictures of the chief components of Washington society showed a distressing sameness, the women whom she favored being always described as of great beauty, having faces of the classic oval, their hair raven or golden in hue, and forms that rivalled that of Venus, while the men were "giants of intellect, with penetrating eyes and expansive brows." Nor was she more restrained in her reprobation than in her admiration, or truer to fact; and John Quincy Adams, when he described her as "the virago-errant in enchanted armor," dealt with her to the full as gently as she deserved.

Her paper ran a longer course than might have been expected under the circumstances; and, in 1847, it contained an announcement which is significant both of the pride of sex in the writer and the growth of prominence among American women in certain lines, when in February of that year it announced: "Washington City has been honored with the presence of three of America's most talented authoresses: Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, Mrs. A. L. Phelps, and Mrs. Ann S. Stephens." The fame of the

last named of this trio has not survived; but the names of the other two are still known, even if their works are neglected.

The administration of President Harrison brought little addition to the normal gaiety of Washington; but that of President Tyler was in some respects the most brilliant from a social standpoint that the capital had known. Mrs. Tyler's health prevented her from taking the lead in social functions; but her two daughters, Mrs. Lightfoot Jones and Mrs. Semple, admirably filled her place, aided by Mrs. Robert Tyler, the young wife of the president's son. Even a fancy-dress ball was included among the White House entertainments of that time, one being given in honor of the president's little granddaughter, Mary Fairlie Tyler, who appeared thereat as a fairy, with gossamer wings, a diamond star on her brow, and a silver wand in her hand. The ball given at the White House in 1841, in honor of the young Prince de Joinville, was another notable event in the social world. Perhaps a more truly noteworthy function there, however, was the official reception attended by Charles Dickens, who was received by President Tyler and Mrs. Semple, and who afterward spoke in warm terms of the order which was preserved by the concourse of over three thousand people who had been attracted by his fame.

Though there was now no talk of "republican simplicity," there were still some old-fashioned people who were repelled by the ever-increasing dominance of society and social interests at the capital of the nation, and who reprobated the state with which the chief executive and his family held their court. Mrs. Frémont tells us that the second Mrs. Tyler was made the object of much animadversion because "she drove four horses (finer than those of the Russian minister) and because she received

seated, her armchair on a slightly raised platform, in a velvet gown with three feathers in her hair;" and certainly, though the number of feathers would seem to have no bearing upon the matter of republicanism, that raised platform is unpleasantly suggestive of the dais of a throne. The first wife of Mr. Tyler died after a residence in the presidential mansion of little more than a year, and her successor in the heart of the president and to the dignities of "the first lady of the land," Miss Julia Gardner, of New York, enjoyed but eight months of official leadership. She was greatly admired for the ease and dignity with which she wore her high honors; but that raised platform suggests that it may not have been ill for some of the still cherished institutions of our country, even in its social aspects, that she was mistress of the White House and its customs no longer than was actually the case.

The last administration during the first half century of the nineteenth of our era, that of President Taylor, was not remarkable for social innovations; but it is noteworthy for the fact that one of the prominent members of the society of the capital was the second Mrs. Jefferson Davis, who, little less than a decade later, was to abandon the sphere of her peaceful influence at Washington to share in the responsibilities of her husband as leader of a cause wholly antagonistic to the interests represented by the capital. The death of President Taylor in July, 1850, cast a gloom over the society of Washington and brings us to another era in the history of American womanhood. Greater gloom was to fall, not only upon Washington, but the whole country; and once more the leaders of society were to be forgotten in the heroines, noted or unnoted, of strife.

Chapter XI

The Sectional Division

XI

THE SECTIONAL DIVISION

ONCE more it becomes necessary to recognize the division of our country into sections, as in the days before the Revolution welded it into one nation. The time was fast coming when there should be division in good earnest, when there should be even overt separation; and to understand the effects and tendencies of this time among the women of America it is needful that we take into fuller consideration than we have yet done the differences of custom and thought that existed between the women of the South and the women of the North. For though these met upon common ground and blended in a society which saw but little variation in the types presented to it, there had been constantly growing, since the time of the first amalgamation of the colonies into one nation, differences between the Northern and the Southern cultures that were little less than radical in their ultimate nature and expressions.

The distinctiveness of type had come about gradually; but it had always existed as a possibility, even in the youngest days of the republic. The conditions of civilization North and South were in themselves divergent, and they were sure to produce an ever-increasing effect. The North was the land of affairs; the South was the home of luxury. The North worked for itself and won its sustenance

by the labor of its own hands or brain; the South watched its wealth accumulate by the toil of its slaves, and thus had time and to spare for the cultivation of the graces which come of leisure. Up to the inception of the Civil War it cannot be denied that the South was preëminently the fountain of American society. Even as Virginia was the Mother of Presidents, so was the whole South the parent of the most charming, the most refined, the most cultured of the dames and damsels who held society aloft upon their lovely shoulders. The superiority was not of kind, for in this the North steadily held its own, as was but natural; it was of numbers. For every recognized ornament to society sent by the North to grace the circles of Washington, the South sent two.

When the century passed its meridian and turned to the descending road there had come about a practical division of the country into two sections once more. Not only in feeling,—which, however, was subdued and hardly expressed save by the more bitter partisans, at least among the women,—but in nature. While the higher ideals of the woman of the North and her of the South were the same, they differed in nearly everything that made for progress toward the goal they sought. The tendency toward aristocratic ideas had taken unwonted shape toward the end of the first half of the nineteenth century. According to the false ideal which had come to take the place of the higher one of earlier days, the Southern woman was *par excellence* the aristocrat of America. She was lapped in luxury; she was surrounded by every refinement; she was waited upon by hosts of servants; she was the representative in many ways of the feudal chatelaine of olden times in England, with added refinements of culture and luxury. But all this was bought, though she did not then see the truth, at a terrible price. The Southern conditions,

brought about by the institution of slavery, bore most heavily in effect upon the men of that section; but the women also were in danger of forgetting the strength of their womanhood in the idleness of untroubled days and in the lack of power that results from the transfer of all burdens to the shoulders of others.

The life of the typical Virginia lady of those luxurious days was an unending round of social pleasures, and this life in its turn was typical of that of the Southern woman of refinement in all sections, though presenting that life in its most enlarged and broadened aspects. She had her responsibilities, and she recognized them; she was the queen of a vast estate, on which many souls looked to her for comfort and help, and, as a rule, she responded to their call with all alacrity. To her slaves, at least as far as the house servants were concerned, she was friend rather than mistress, acknowledging them as part of her family and caring for them almost as for her own children. But the trouble was that she generally did these things vicariously; she delegated her powers, seeing to it, indeed, that they were administered as she would have them, but herself doing little. She was given over, for her own part, to the demands of society and to the requirements of hospitality; and Southern hospitality is proverbial, and the courtly welcome and gracious attentions of the hostess of the plantation mansion in the ante-bellum days were among the most agreeable and vivid impressions of her guests. Nor with all the social distinction of the southern household was there a sacrifice of a single charm of home life. Every important domestic event was attended with becoming ceremony. The arrival of the newborn, the home gatherings of later years, and the wedding,—these were occasions to be celebrated by all; occasions when the tenderest family sentiment was manifested. At such times,

it may be remarked, the system of domestic slavery appealed rather as a virtue than as a stain, for the household slaves were interested sharers in the joys of the family. In this connection, one is reminded of the Georgia negress who, on being asked if she were the slave of a certain person, replied: "Yes, I belong to them, and they belong to me."

In her home the typical Virginia lady did little with her own hands; she directed, but she would have thought it shame to labor even in such a cause. Her hands were too delicate to work, her feet too dainty to press the ground; she never walked where she could ride, and carriages were always at her command. Her winters, if she lived on her plantation, were passed in a round of pleasures, of balls and minor social functions; her summers she spent at the famous "Springs," whither she drove in her cumbrous but comfortable carriage,—in which way, indeed, some of the more enthusiastic lovers of those "Springs" came even from the southernmost bournes of the land. A friend of the writer, for instance, once told him how she had often travelled in this manner from New Orleans to the Greenbrier White Sulphur Springs in those halcyon days "before the war."

The Northern dame, she of New York or Boston or of those dwelling in the rural districts, knew little of such luxuries as these. Between the Southern lady and the Northern there was one radical point of difference in those days which was more effective to separate their ideas and ideals than might be thought: the former was a dweller in the country, the latter in cities. Type is here spoken of. The typical Southern lady was found on the plantation, the typical Northern lady in the heart of the city. This condition was imposed upon the wealthiest and most cultured of each section by the variant conditions under which they

lived; it was in her own home that the Southern woman found the most power for her wealth, in the city that the Northern woman alone found avenues for her money to buy for her the best things of culture, material or mental. And this severance made for certain results. The Southern woman held to isolation of rule as the best that she knew; the Northern woman believed that in segregation and community of interests alone came hope of the best. These theories were unrecognized; but they were inherent and dominant.

Moreover, there still existed in the North, especially in the further removed sections, a strong leaven of the old Puritan spirit; and this could neither understand nor tolerate the spirit of luxury that reigned in the South. Each section misunderstood and unjustly contemned the other. To the Northern woman, she of the South was a pampered aristocrat of the most ignoble kind, caring for nothing but the gratification of her luxurious tastes, battening on the sufferings of a humanity which she bought and sold as cattle, an Augusta in her luxuries and love of self; to the Southern woman, she of the North was cold, hard, uncultured, unrefined, plebeian in tastes and existence, and generally on a lower plane than the daughter of the Cavaliers. The Southern woman despised her sister of the North; the Northern woman hated her sister of the South. Where there was meeting and blending on the contiguous limits of the sections there was more of understanding and therefore of toleration for the points of severance of ideas; but even here there was cause of strife in the heated politics which had for some time been appealing to the passions of our statesmen. With the quick enthusiasm in such matters that is an attribute of their sex and which blinds women even more than men to the calmer suggestions of reason, the women of the country became divided

into two bitterly hostile camps because of the matters which their husbands and brothers discussed in the councils of the nation. It is true that in this case the main question at issue had unwonted appeal to the women themselves; for she of the South saw her wealth and luxury threatened by the Abolitionists, while she of the North made herself a part of the cause of ill-treated humanity, as she deemed it. Had the men been able to restrain the passions which at this time stirred them almost to frenzy, the women would not have permitted the glowing embers to become extinguished without being fanned into red flame.

That the women of our country were largely instrumental in bringing about the fratricidal strife which shook that country to its centre cannot be denied. Even such firebrands as Phillips and Garrison did not incite so bitter a spirit as did the many women who espoused their cause. It was a time of fanaticism in the North and fury in the South; and both these feelings reached their culmination in the women of the sections. One of the most powerful influences for the making of discord was from the hand of a woman, when Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and thereby led much of the thought and prejudices of both sections into utterly false channels. The South, and especially its women, saw in the book a vile libel upon its culture, a base slander of its most representative institutions; the North, especially its women, accepted the book as literal fact and looked upon their brothers and sisters of the South as slave-drivers and cruel task-mistresses, building the structure of their wealth and luxury upon the crushed bodies of their weaker and more degraded fellows and careless of the bitter moans of the oppressed. The acceptance by the North of the book as fact embittered the South, conscious of the injustice of

the thing, to the last degree, while the North upon that utterly inadequate authority reviled the South for the imaginary crimes which were rife in its midst.

The question of the limitation of slavery had been long before the country and had produced much bitterness of feeling on both sides; but the idea of the sudden abolishment of the institution, "peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must," was of new growth in the decade preceding the war, at least in any coherent and prominent form. In the South were many women as well as men who, while they accepted and tried to make the best of the institution which had been handed down to them by their ancestors, were at heart as eager Abolitionists as any of the North; but they knew that such a radical change must be brought about by gradual steps or it would open the way to yet greater evils, of which the sudden impoverishment of the section was not the greatest. In the North were men and women who held themselves aloof from the rabid fanaticism of their day, and while they heartily desired the eradication of the taint of slavery from the country which boasted of its freedom, yet were willing to trust to time and the growth of principle for the result which they desired. But on both sides these conservatives were unfortunately in the minority and their influence was of no avail; on both sides they were looked upon as traitors to the cause which they loved best and most wisely of all.

There might have been hope of compromise; the fanatics were still in the minority among the men who governed the destinies of the nation, and while there was bitterness and even hatred rife among these men, there was yet stronger dread of open separation, so that there might have been reached some conclusion which would have been productive of results satisfactory in the main to both sides, though not in full measure; but the women would

not have it so. They flung themselves into politics with a fervor that was fatal to all the interests of peace; for those of the North could not understand any toleration of "the accursed thing," while they of the South demanded that their husbands and lovers should resent the insult which had been imposed upon Southern womanhood in the vile slanders which were freely circulated in Abolitionist circles. That these slanders were the voice of fanaticism and not of mere hatred was not understood; that they were reprobated by the better elements of the North was not believed.

In both sections an appeal to arms was talked of if secession were adopted and resisted. At first this was but idle menace; but it gradually grew to the proportions of stern determination at least in one of the sections, and by none was it so eagerly welcomed and fanned as by the women. "The peace of them that make peace" was not for the American woman of that time; all the natural militancy of the feminine nature was aroused to its highest pitch, and it was more at the instigation of hatred than as an appeal to justice that the thought of war was dear to the women of our riven country. Riven it was already in spirit, though not as yet in fact; the shadow of coming strife lay heavy on the land long before it took substance. There were still those, chiefly among the men, who believed that from all this lurid smoke there would result nothing worse than smouldering embers, which would eventually perish unharmful; that thus it could not be was owing in greatest part to the influence of those who in the bitter days to come were to bear the brunt of the suffering and agony of war,—the women of America.

It is grateful to turn for a moment to look upon the last days of Washington society under the old régime. Buchanan was the last of the old-time presidents, and under his administration Washington society went its normal

way of gaiety, though disturbed in its enjoyment by the thickening cloud that hung over the land and gathered most darkly at the capital. President Buchanan was a bachelor; but his mansion did not lack female rule, for his niece, Harriet Lane, took upon herself the onerous duties of mistress of the White House, and never were they more gracefully fulfilled. Young as she was, she had few rivals and no superiors in knowledge of the requirements of her position and ability to meet those requirements; never was the White House ruled in more dignified and gracious manner than by this young woman. She had had excellent training for her dignities; when her uncle, in 1852, was sent as Minister to the Court of Saint James, she accompanied him thither, and her beauty and accomplishments won instantaneous recognition and admiration from the most prejudiced of English critics in these matters. Her character was as admirable and admired as was her beauty, and she was in all ways fitted to grace a court, whether that court were royal or republican.

During the four years of her uncle's stormy administration she ruled the social world of Washington as of right and title, and her rule was on all sides acknowledged to be worthy of allegiance. It was the last day of oldtime American society, and it died in splendor. No more courteous and cultured gentleman than James Buchanan ever occupied the White House as its master, even though as a statesman he was sadly lacking in the qualities which were demanded by the circumstances of his times; no more gracious lady than Harriet Lane ever presided over the social destinies of the presidential mansion, and with her there is no need of limiting statement in modification of the praise bestowed.

When the time came for Buchanan to surrender into the hands of a stronger man the reins of government, Miss Lane

retired with him to Wheatland, his country seat, where the pair spent together the stormy years of the Civil War. In 1866, Miss Lane married Henry Elliott Johnston, of Baltimore, who died in 1884, his two sons, all that were born of the marriage, having preceded him to the grave. Thus Mrs. Johnston was left alone; and thus she still lives on, the sole remaining link between the White House of the days before the Civil War and the present time. She alone, of all who ruled as social queen of the country in the time when this meant far more than now, is left to us; and she lives in the same quiet dignity with which she once placed the stamp of her individuality upon the social functions of the presidential mansion and made them truly noteworthy. Upon the accession of Edward VII. of England, that king, who had been elaborately entertained by Miss Lane and her uncle at the White House during his visit to this country in 1860, sent to Mrs. Johnston a personal invitation to be present at his approaching coronation; and his cordial letter showed in what high esteem he held the gracious lady whose kindness to him in his youth had dwelt so long in his memory. It was a deserved recognition of the charm that had made notable the last lady ruler of the White House in its days of social eminence, and the act was as graceful as deserved.

So, in Harriet Lane Johnston, we find the last surviving memory of the court society of the elder days of our country. With her exit from the White House went also the traditions of the social past, and with her exit from life will go also the last of a line of acknowledged rulers, little less than regal in their dignities, of the social world of America.

It is now necessary to turn again to the subject of the war between the sections. Darker and darker grew the threatening cloud, until it was rent by a bolt which

fell with fatal effect and set the whole land in a blaze. This was the famous insurrection of John Brown, which knew its inception and inglorious end at Harper's Ferry. It is not easy for us at this time to appreciate the aspects of "John Brown's raid," as it presented itself to the North and the South, and the aspect which it especially bore to the women of the latter section has never been given its full importance at the hands of chroniclers. Brown's acknowledged and boasted purpose to set free the slaves and arm them against their masters in insurrection was looked upon by every Southern woman as a direct threat —of which the carrying out was averted only by the hand of an over-ruling Providence—against that which her womanhood most prized. She knew what would have been the effect of the loosing upon the community of a horde of semi-savages, mad with the lust of blood and rapine, drunk with the liberty which they would look upon as unbridled license; for such, as she well knew, would the majority of the slaves become under conditions which would appeal to their worst side and would in their novelty lead to all excess. The narrow view which sees in the burning anger of the South toward this attempt only dread of loss of property is utterly false; it was the personal aspect of the matter which appealed to every Southern woman, and, because of this, to every Southern man. Even the partial success of such an attempt would have meant ruined and dishonored homes throughout the Southern land; the honor of its women, that most precious of all possessions, was in peril in such enterprise, and it was the threat against this that set the Southland aflame with rage against the would-be perpetrators of such an atrocity. It was not the menace to property or even to life; it was

"the unutterable shame
That turns the coward's heart to steel, the sluggard's blood to flame."

For the South knew the negro, his bad qualities as well as his good; and, while the women of the South knew that their elder house-servants would protect them with their lives, if necessary, they also knew that the horde of field-hands, intoxicated by a liberty whose nature they could not understand, would turn at once to the gratification of the savage nature which slept chained within them and would make of the land an offense to heaven.

This was bad enough; but worse yet, since the attempt had miserably failed, was the fact that the North saw none of these things. It did not, seemingly could not, understand. Where the woman of the South saw in John Brown only the brutal assailer of all that womanhood held most precious, she of the North,—who could she have realized the peril in which her Southern sister stood, would have stirred the North with her cry,—saw in him only the martyr to the cause of freedom, the man who gave his life in the attempt to bring from bondage an oppressed and ill-treated race; and so completely had prejudice and fanaticism clouded the conscience that when Wendell Phillips made of this man a certain blasphemous comparison she was not shocked, but, carried away by her enthusiasm, hailed the words as true and deserved. This does not apply to all the daughters of the North; there were some who saw clearly and were not blinded by the simoom of fanaticism which swept over that section; but there was a minority which dared not lift its voice against the clamor of the masses. The most fatal of all causes of strife had fallen upon the North: it did not understand.

But this in turn the Southern woman could not comprehend. She could not see that the peril to her honor, so plain to her, was beyond the scope of Northern vision. Therefore she in her wrath accused her sisters of the North of carelessness of her honor in their enthusiasm for

the cause of a race which would put that honor in peril; she held them indifferent to the preservation of the crown of her womanhood, so that a few blacks might be given a freedom which they would turn to the worst account. She laid it all to sectional hatred, to the cherished anger of the Puritan against the Cavalier; she was intolerant—and who can blame her, seeing as she did?—of the canonization of John Brown, which was chiefly the work of her Northern sisters, to whose enthusiasm that of the men, even of such fanatics as Phillips, was as nothing. So, begun and fostered in mutual misunderstanding, grew the breach between the sections; and of all the hands that digged the grave of Peace, the most eager and rapid were those of the women of our land.

Where shall we place the blame? Each side saw the other in utter distortion, each twisted to its own understanding the acts and utterances of the other, and each was justly incensed according to its own view. In her ignorance of the certain results of the attempt whose failure she deplored, the Northern woman saw in the rejoicing of Southern womanhood over the failure and fate of John Brown only a savage and unwomanly exultation over the martyrdom of one who had sacrificed himself that others might live in freedom, the heritage of every American, and who, in pursuit of his noble ideal, had of necessity attacked the wealth of the South, which wealth was ill-gotten and ill-held. The Southern woman looked upon the attempt to give power over her honor to a lower race, civilized only in certain aspects and with all the worst of barbarism sleeping like a tiger within it, and occasionally displaying itself in aspect of terror, as the expression of the feeling of the North, the ultimate goal of the fanaticism which was rising higher and higher as the Abolitionists grew in power. To both, John Brown

represented the dominant spirit of the North; but each translated his aspect in different ways. Each was bitterly unjust; each was utterly in the wrong; and each was convinced with a perfect conviction of the righteousness of her own stand and of her thought of the other. When such position is taken, peace is doomed.

Society was disrupted. It had maintained a certain cohesion where the sections mingled; it had been shaken, but not overthrown. But the hanging of John Brown gave American society, as comprising all parts of the country and devoid of sectional aspects, its deathblow. Another society of like aspects was later to arise, perhaps never again to be overthrown, so that we can again talk of American society in the larger sense; but this which we know is not that which held its chief fortalice in Washington before the capital was yielded to the perils of the centre of strife. The daughters of even such closely contiguous States as Pennsylvania and Virginia could not meet in social function when each believed the other to be the representative of the most evil of civilizations, when every interest which either most cherished was inimical to every interest most dear to the other. Rapidly the representatives of Southern society forsook the capital, going to their own country, where they hoped soon to form another and yet more brilliant circle than that which had given to the centre of our republicanism much of the glitter and all the *prestige* of a royal court. The result of the presidential campaign would decide the future of the South; but that there would be separation of the sections, for a time or permanently, few doubted. The chief question that remained to be decided was whether the separation would be peaceful or won at the point of the bayonet.

Perhaps, had they foreseen the consequences of their enthusiasm, the women of both sides would have been

more moderate in their advocacy of their respective creeds; but women rarely look to the end, and the feminine enthusiasts of those days were no exception to the rule. With all their strength, and whether for good or evil, there is none greater in effect, they urged their husbands and lovers and brothers, the one side to wipe out in blood, if need and opportunity were, the insult to their womanhood; the other to free the oppressed from bondage and from the tyranny shown by Southern women as well as men. The actions and utterances of each were plain to the other; the standpoints which dictated those acts and words were hidden by the dense mist of prejudice. Thus by woman's influence was precipitated the conflict which had already become almost inevitable.

Chapter XII

The Civil War

XII

THE CIVIL WAR

THE election of Abraham Lincoln to the chief magistracy annihilated the last hope of peaceful solution of the vexed question of the time. Hope, indeed, there was in few female breasts, for with deplorable unanimity the women of our country looked forward to war as the most desirable result of all the anger that smouldered in both sections. Secession followed hard upon the election of Lincoln; the Southern senators and representatives resigned their seats in the councils of the nation; and that nation was a nation no more.

Though there were many contributing circumstances, and those of the gravest, the women of our country had been the most influential cause of the rupture and its immediate result of war. They had inflamed the hearts of the men so that the few who retained some coolness of judgment and some tolerance of spirit could make no headway against the extremists. The women were now to bear the brunt of the hard-following consequences of their furious enthusiasm; but, before they began to feel those consequences in full measure, they were to enjoy a brief period of delight: that delight which their sex ever finds in the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war," until they learn something of its stern realities.

When peace was formally declared impossible, the women of both sections found congenial vent for the enthusiasm

which had been so fatal to the efforts of the peace-makers. Each side firmly believed its cause pure and right, without the shadow of doubt being possible, and each acted from the depths of a conviction which was as much the child of education as of environing circumstances. All over the country there was enthusiasm which hardly stopped short of gala merriment. The younger women of both sides embroidered banners for their pet regiments and with their own fair hands gave those banners into the keeping of their knights, who swore—they did not know the difficulties of the task—to bring back those flags unsullied by defeat. The men were eager enough to meet the hardships and perils which they had not yet measured; but the women surpassed even the masculine eagerness, hurrying their sons and lovers and brothers and often husbands to the front, hardly finding time for tears in their enthusiasm and patriotism.

For patriotism, though sometimes not easily distinguished from selfish delight in the romance which precedes war, it was on both sides—a patriotism which was to be sorely tried and never to fail. It was misdirected in most cases as yet; the social functions which made brilliant the rival capitals for a time were mistaken expressions of the deep feeling which glowed beneath; but they had their meaning and were promises of better things to come. From Maine to Texas there burned a flame of patriotism such as had not been called forth in like eagerness of display even by the days of the Revolution, and its chief expressions were from the women of the divided land. So trivial and misdirected as yet were the majority of its expressions that it might have been thought shallow and unenduring; but it was to prove its intensity and depth in other guise, and these first ebullitions were but the foam that glances on the unsounded sea.

There was little fear of suffering on either side. Each believed that, so good was its cause, so valiant its supporters, it must triumph within a short space. A prominent New York journal prophesied the fall of Richmond within three months, saying: "We spit upon a longer-deferred justice." The South thought that Washington would be taken at one blow. In these beliefs, which seem to us, knowing the men who were to bear the standards of both causes, such wild folly, the women more than shared. Northern and Southern woman alike believed with full conviction that the men of her country were unconquerable and that God fought on her side of the quarrel; how then could defeat or disaster come to the cause she loved? It was impossible.

It must be admitted that in the first stages of the war the weight of feminine enthusiasm was in the Southern scale. There was good reason for this. At the first call of battle, the South sent forth her best and bravest, her own most cherished sons, while the North responded more tardily, leaving much of its work in the hands of substitutes of the lower class and of mercenaries. The foreigners who had of late come to our shores in such numbers had settled in the North and Northwest; and they naturally fought rather from necessity and wish for bounty than from patriotism. The flame was as steady in the North, but it was not so vivid; it had not yet been blown to full fervor. Moreover, in the North the full gravity of the task undertaken was still less recognized than in the South. When McDowell marched upon Johnston and Beauregard at Bull Run, carriages full of the leaders of Washington society, women as well as men, came to make gay his camp and see the total discomfiture of the enemy; and the flight back to the capital which followed his defeat included many women of the upper circles, whose terrors and sufferings were not

undeserved as results of the extremes into which their enthusiasm had misled them. This was a poor expression indeed of the patriotism which glowed in the female breast of that day; but the time produced a better specimen and showed how the feeling found true as well as false vent. It was a young girl who brought to Beauregard the first intelligence of McDowell's movement upon Manassas and enabled him to give Johnston the warning which led to the timely juncture of their forces and the result of the battle. The young lady had heard some officers of the Union army discussing the projected movement while at the table of her father in his house near Washington. Delicately nurtured and reared as she had been, with her own hands she saddled her horse and rode through the night, partly through camps of coarsely jesting soldiery, partly along hardly-marked roads, amid darkness and in loneliness, that she might serve the land she loved. It was the first of many such services that were to be done by the women of the South, who alone had opportunity to render them, or they had surely found many rivals.

If the romantic aspect of war received in the North a rude shock in the disaster of Bull Run, it was but enhanced in the South. Moreover, the enthusiasm of the Southern woman, and particularly of the girl, found more present and congenial vent than did that of her Northern sister. Not only did the former frequently see the forms and even the deeds of the leaders of her cause, but some of those leaders were calculated to awaken enthusiasm to a degree that could not be rivalled by any of the generals of the North. The soldiers of the Union had no Stuart, with his gay laughter and merry jest and his floating feather to heighten the romance of his achievements and present him as a veritable knight of old; no Pelham with his beardless face and modest blush to make one marvel that this

laughing boy should be in battle a very genius of war as he fought his guns against fearful odds. Custer, with his flowing locks, might have won some hearts had the war been carried into Northern territory; but Custer had not at his back the fame of Stuart, whose rides around McClellan made him a hero of romance, nor had he the social qualities that made so popular the Southern leader, while the latter's purity of life and deep religious feeling, beneath all his frivolity of manner, appealed with power to the finer natures of the Southern women. He was the chosen knight, the adored hero, of Southern womanhood; and when his feather appeared at the head of his daredevils there was feminine rejoicing and eager welcome.

It was in the facts of the personal devotion inspired by some of their leaders,—Lee, Jackson, and Stuart, especially,—of the proximity of those fighting for her cause, of her presence on the scene of strife, and of her deeper sufferings and greater call for endurance, that explanation must be found of the indubitable phenomenon that there was far more of enthusiasm displayed by the woman of the South than by her of the North, at least during the first years of the war. Enthusiasm only, not devotion to principle. That was assured in both; both gave a deep and effective love to the cause which they held as right and just, and for which they were willing to give their very lives if need were. The Southern woman was called upon to make greater sacrifices, to bear greater sufferings, than her sister of the North; but none can doubt that the latter would have borne all these as nobly had fate called upon her to do so. Those who know the story of Southern womanhood in those terrible days must give to it all honor and admiration; but these must not be granted as exclusively its right, without due sense of the sufficient patriotism and courage displayed by Northern womanhood at the call of country.

Each gave all that she had to give; each proved that her patriotism was not a mere name.

If among the women of the South there was more fervent enthusiasm than among those of the North, there was also deeper hatred of the enemies of their cause. When General Butler, as master of New Orleans, issued the equally famous and infamous proclamation that won for him for all time the title of "Beast Butler" among the women of the South, setting forth that any woman who insulted on the street a Union soldier might be treated, without redress on her part, as a woman of the town, he not only consigned his memory to odium, but recorded the bitterness of the feminine spirit among the conquered people. The best friend of Southern womanhood cannot deny that this bitterness often took unjustifiable expression. The very issuance of the proclamation proved that the ladies of New Orleans were given to unseemly vituperation of the soldiers who bore aloft the cause so bitterly hated by the women of the invaded land, and in other ways and places the obligations of ladyhood and even of femininity were too often forgotten in the impulses of hatred and wrath. These ebullitions of the female spirit were not to be repressed by circumstances; that spirit flamed but the more fiercely as it found itself in danger of result. In these days of calmer judgment we know what excuse there was among Southern women for the feeling of hatred and bitterness; we know what it meant to ladies of delicacy and refinement to be insulted by a brutal soldiery, too often unrepressed even by their officers; we can understand the helpless wrath that filled the breast of the Southern woman as she saw her dearest household possessions taken from her or wantonly destroyed by mercenaries, as was the rule rather than the exception when Sherman and his "bummers" went "marching through Georgia"

and forgot the rules of civilized warfare, or when Sheridan almost fulfilled his boast that he "would make the Valley of Virginia so barren that a crow flying over it would have to carry its own rations," or when Milroy and his German troops burned and harried and oppressed. Had the operations of war been set in the North as in the South, there would doubtless have been equal cause for hatred in that section, but the only time that warfare was carried thither it was governed and directed by a general who would not tolerate the modern methods of making war upon unarmed people, and the burning of Chambersburg was the sole act of vandalism of which the North ever had the knowledge that comes of suffering. So the history of womanhood during the war between the sections is largely a history of the women of the Confederacy, just as the latent and mediate effects of that war first showed themselves among Southern womanhood.

Indeed, after the first impulses of enthusiasm were over, the part played in the war by the women of the North was largely confined to endurance and sacrifice of the emotions—neither a small thing, yet only a part of that which was borne by their Southern sisters. They gave their dear ones uncomplainingly and even gladly and they endured suspense and sorrow and sometimes hardship while the breadwinner was absent on the business of his country; but of personal suffering they knew nothing. Far be the thought of minimizing their gifts; the thousands of bereft wives and mothers laid on the altar of their country their greatest sacrifice, and they did this with a grand spirit of faith and endurance that was alike beautiful and inspiring; but all that they did in this wise was done also by the Southern women, and these bore added pangs of suffering in the destruction of their homes, in the loss of all their substance, and in personal peril and privation and

the rest of the woes that await womanhood in a conquered country.

Nor must it be forgotten that the Southern woman was peculiarly unfitted by the circumstances of her nurture and training to bear the privations which fell to her lot in such full measure. She had been reared in the greatest luxury that this country could give; she had been from time immemorial the spoilt child of our land, taught that there was not and never would be need for her to raise her hand in effort or to express an ungratified wish; she was refined and cultured and totally, as it seemed, unfitted for rude contact with the world. Yet she forgot all these things when the need came. The Virginia lady, when the tide of war flowed irresistibly over her State, frequently "refugeed," to use her own most unjustifiable and abominable vocable, into some less perilous section of the land, where she lived the life of a peasant, doing her own housework, mending and making the clothes worn by herself and her children, cooking her poor meal of bacon and substituting for the fragrant Mocha to which she had been accustomed beans whose flavor made a mere mockery of the coffee they were intended to represent, and doing all with a gallant cheerfulness which found its sole failure when she thought of the sufferings of her husband and sons in the starving and barefooted army of Lee. To this pass was she reduced, she who had lived upon "the fat of the land," for whom had been reserved the daintiest morsels that the land could supply, and whose hands had never known a weightier task than some dainty embroidery. The North could show no like evidence of patient courage, not having opportunity for its display. The one point at which the women of the two sections met on common ground was in the hospital service; and here the Northern woman had the advantage in efficiency,

though not in tenderness. The organization of these matters was extremely poor in both the Union and the Confederacy; but, because of greater facilities springing from greater command of money, the hospital organization of the North, both field and fixed, was far better than that of the South, which indeed could hardly be said to have a hospital organization at all. In these hospitals worked thousands of devoted women, and their ministrations to the wounded and dying of both sides must not be forgotten when we reckon up the sum of the work of American womanhood. On both sides, ladies of culture and refinement devoted themselves to this pious work, and this was the most worthy and lasting outlet that was found for Northern feminine enthusiasm in the cause of the Union, and the name of Dorothea Lynde Dix, the head of the organized force of Northern hospital nurses, will always be held in especial honor for devotion and ability in this noble cause, as well as in the amelioration of the condition of the indigent insane, to which latter cause her whole life was chiefly devoted.

There were few especial heroines developed by the war; heroism was so general when there was call for it among the women that it attracted but little notice and won no lasting fame, even in its most remarkable displays. There has come down to us hardly a single female name as being especially singled out during this time for any noteworthy action. Indeed, there was such dearth of especial women heroines that one poet was driven, when he wished to stir the blood of his people with enthusiasm for feminine heroism, to invent one; but the present day wisely refuses to put any faith in the hoary legend of Barbara Frietchie, which indeed, as given by Whittier, is full of the most absurd improbabilities. To say nothing of the unlikelihood of "Stonewall" Jackson ordering a platoon—it

could hardly have been a regiment—to fire at a flag-staff instead of directing someone to enter the house and remove the objectionable object,—though even this would have been uncharacteristic of the man who smiled and saluted when a pretty girl laughingly flourished an American flag in his face as he rode past her in the streets of Frederick,—the quickness of the old lady in catching that flag as it fell from the staff, to say nothing of her activity in getting to the window from the spot where she was presumably sheltered from "the rifle-blast," would put a professional juggler to shame. Then again, why Jackson should have been "riding ahead" does not seem clear, since that is not the place for a general while on the march, and every detail of the incident is sufficiently unmilitary to have been, as it was, the conception of one who had never in his life as much as smelt gunpowder. No; the legend of Barbara must be given up, even though it deprive us of one of the few heroines of its day.

The debatable ground "between the lines" did, however, furnish history with some notable incidents wherein women figured as the chief influences, even if the names of these heroines were not chronicled. For obvious reasons, the names were not disclosed at the time of the incidents when the respective armies alternately held the ground where lived the women whose deeds were chronicled, and afterward these deeds were forgotten in graver matters. One fair inhabitant of Washington in the early days of the struggle used to give Stuart, who for a time after the battle of Bull Run held the southern bank of the Potomac, most valuable information by means of a cunningly devised system of signals, executed by the raising and lowering of the window shades in her house, which was within full sight of the Confederate pickets. For a time the Confederacy had a regular force of female

spies in the capital of their opponents, and some of the information thus gained was of great service.

Of course the Federal government also maintained a corps of female spies, though the name of only one of all the roll on both sides—that of Belle Boyd—is known to fame. Belle Boyd's adventurous career during the war doubtless produced some few results in the movement of the armies of the South; but even she hardly did yeoman service for her cause. In respect of espionage, the Confederacy had a decided advantage over its enemies, for the society at Richmond, both social and official, was made up of more constant and, therefore, better known elements than that of the always fluctuating population of Washington. So at Richmond it was hardly possible for a woman to seem that which she was not in the matter of sympathy, while in the national capital the constant influx of strangers and sojourners made the keeping of a military or political secret a matter of the utmost difficulty.

These more military pursuits, however, are hardly creditable and little congenial to true womanhood, and the present record does not care to concern itself with them. There was enough of passive heroism displayed during the time of strife to fill the onlooker with admiration for the courage as well as the patriotism of American womanhood, and these things are more pleasant to look upon than is professional espionage. The display of courage and endurance was varyingly manifested in the different parts of the country and under different conditions; but it was constant in its spirit. The debt of the Union to its women has never been acknowledged, perhaps because never understood. The many triumphs of the Confederate arms on the battlefield gave rise to a strong "peace party" in the North; and, though general history makes no mention of the fact, there can be in the mind of one who

remembers the trend and expressions of public sentiment little doubt that it was chiefly the women of the North who barred the way of that party to ultimate victory. Because the most prominent expressions in matters political come from male sources, we are apt to neglect to recognize the home influence which is so frequently a factor in the total result that accrues from the consequent action. It was the men who fulminated against peace, the men who went to the polls and by their votes decided that the war must continue until either the South had been brought back into the Union or the cause of the latter was so hopeless that to continue the struggle were folly; but it was in large measure the women who, by their steadfastness of devotion to the cause, impelled the men to such action. There will be few among those who remember the interior history of those terrible days who will not agree in the statement that to the women of the North was due, in great measure, the hearty affirmative response which rose from the country to the question, "Shall the war go on?"

Southern womanhood was equally steadfast in the cause of liberty, as the South deemed it; indeed, the Southern women, as unyielding in principle as their Northern sisters, were yet more admirable in their constancy, because of the conditions under which that constancy was displayed. They were not daunted by the ruin of their homes, by the death of their loved ones, by their own sufferings and perils. Unlike the North, the South recognized its unpayable debt to its women, perhaps because the evidences of that debt were so much more patent than where these were confined to the direction and fostering of public sentiment. The Southern chronicler of that woeful time gladly acknowledged how the women, by their enthusiastic encouragement and their

gallant loyalty, encouraged the men and kept them to their duty if only from shame of their displaying less constancy than the sex which was termed the weaker. When Lee stood at bay in Petersburg, it was less upon the bayonets of his ragged army that the Southern Confederacy was upheld in its last struggle than upon the fiery constancy of its women. Fine as was the spirit of that little army, which laughed at its own plight and jestingly termed its components "Lee's Miserables," in punning allusion to Victor Hugo's great work, then just issued in America, it was, after all, but the reflex and expression of the spirit of the delicate ladies of the little town, who lived unconcerned amid the clamor of bursting shells and even held their little social gatherings in the centre of the whirlpool of war, that the soldiers might have some recreation during the scant hours of rest from duty. When at last the skeleton army was driven from its defences and forced to lay down its arms at Appomattox, it was the women of Richmond who received the news with bitterest grief but least dismay, and faced with calmest courage the threat of the indignities and sufferings which they feared would result from Northern occupation. That these fears were groundless, even the baser elements of the soldiery being in the leash of a man who believed in civilized warfare, does not detract from the gallantry which anticipated rapine and sack without quailing.

The surrender of Johnston's army, following hard upon that of Lee's forces, ended the struggle, and the South was left to face the consciousness and consequences of defeat. On none of its children did the blow fall with such stunning force as upon its daughters. That the South could not be conquered, that it must attain its independence, that God fought its battles, formed the creed of every Southern woman, and even when the end was in

sight to the vision of Lee and Johnston, still fighting desperately as their duty rather than in any hope, the women refused to believe in such a possibility. But the possibility became a certainty, and Rachel could do nothing but mourn for her children and turn with what courage she might to face conditions full of threat of the worst; nor even here did her courage falter, though her beliefs had proved but broken reeds and her hopes had been swept away, leaving nothing in their place. The South was a land of mourning, not of death only, but of failure of a beloved and trusted cause. Meanwhile, the North was a land of rejoicing; and her women, like all their sex, were immoderate in their triumph, and did not consider, as had the soldiers of the victorious armies, the feelings of those who had fought so long and well. But there was scant opportunity for the display of triumph; for the terrible blow which fell upon the whole country, South as well as North, when Lincoln died under the hand of the assassin, changed joy into mourning, and made of a victorious people one that tasted all the bitterness of sorrow. Heavier calamity never visited this land; and its effects upon the feeling of our womanhood were almost as far-reaching and distressing as its political results. For the women of the South, sore in defeat and unjustly holding Lincoln responsible for the sorrows that had come upon them, openly rejoiced in his taking-off, and forgot their womanhood in their exultation over the foul crime. It was the spirit that awoke at John Brown's insurrection over again, though differently directed; and it awakened a natural response in the North, which saw in the exaltation of murder as the judgment of God a perversity and even criminality of thought which could spring only from innate baseness. Again there was misunderstanding; for the women of the South, blinded by their prejudices and

sufferings to the true character and greatness of the dead man, held him in detestation and rejoiced over his death as that of a hated foe, while they of the North, listening to the cry of exultation that arose from their Southern sisters and unmindful of the sources,—however false in themselves, yet bearing some excuse, if only of madness,—which led to that demonstration of joy, naturally held that Southern women were hardly better than human fiends and utterly unworthy of the guise of womanhood.

The trial of those implicated in the assassination of Lincoln gave a name to be remembered in the annals of American women, though the record be of the saddest. That Mrs. Surratt was legally guilty of complicity in the murder of the martyred president is at least doubtful; it may even be questioned if she were guilty of foreseeing the crime, her part in the conspiracy most probably ending with the plan of abduction which was the forerunner of the murder. None the less, she suffered a shameful death, the passions of the time being too strong for the cooler voice of justice to be heard; and again was enacted, in minor form, the national drama that followed upon the insurrection of John Brown. The women of the South, if they did not go to the lengths of their Northern sisters on the former occasion, looked upon Mrs. Surratt in the light of a martyr to their lost cause, and so expressed themselves with a bitterness and forgetfulness of the true nature of the case which was a denial of their best attributes as women; and the Northern woman, holding Mrs. Surratt to be a very devil of malignity and criminality, could not patiently hear her name spoken with aught but horror and detestation. So the war ended, as it began, in misunderstanding, and, therefore, the bitterest of hatred between the two sections of a land which was at the end of the struggle no more united than at the beginning.

It is pleasant to turn from these manifestations of all that was worst in American womanhood to the consideration of woman's social conditions at the time of the expiration of the war. Even during the period of strife there had been uplifted a new voice from the women of our land, though as yet that voice was too feeble and too drowned in the clash of battle to attract much attention. One of the expressions of this new spirit which had arisen in at least a portion of our women is worthy of note as being in some sense a pioneer. In 1864 there was issued a book called *Woman and Her Era,* by Eliza W. Farnham. The object of the author was to demonstrate the superiority of women over men: not superiority in comparative sense or even for certain ends, but absolute and unimpeachable. The leading argument of the book, as it appeared in syllogistic form and in all its wonders of capital letters, was as follows: "Life is exalted in proportion to the Organic and Functional Complexity; Woman's Organism is more Complex and her Totality of Function larger than those of any other being inhabiting our earth; Therefore her position in the Scale of Life is the most exalted—the Sovereign one." The minor proposition was supported by arguments which belong to the lecture room of the anatomist. Passing in silence over that which the lady calls the "Organic Argument," a little of that which she terms the "Religious Argument,—wherefore, is not clear,—may be quoted with a view to entertainment if not to profit:

"Organic Superiority is in itself proof positive of Super-Organic Superiority. . . . Life is the most advanced which employs, in the service of the greatest number of powers, the most complex mechanism for the End of Use. We are therefore prepared to find in it" [the feminine structure] "the embodiment of a larger number of powers

and higher aims in its Use . . . a deeper feeling for the Ends of Use, a more abiding faith in and loyalty to Development, as the one aim that makes life worthy of acceptance and sweet in its passing taste, and on the other hand to see that its failure herein is more fatal and destructive than it is in the masculine life. . . . The feminine includes the masculine, transcending it in all directions."

This is the synopsis of the major part of the argument, given in the lady's own words; but her conclusion has a more familiar sound to our ears. Here it is:

"The question of Rights settles itself in the true statement of Capacities. Rights are narrowest where Capacities are fewest—broadest where they are the most numerous. . . . It is plain, then, as between masculine and feminine, where the most expanded circle of Rights will be found; and equally plain the absurdity of man, the narrower in Capacities, assuming to define the sphere of Rights for Woman, the broader."

Such was the trumpet-blast sent out by Miss Eliza Farnham, one of the pioneers of the movement which took for its slogan her own cry of "Women's Rights." The work made no stir and has long since passed to the limbo of forgotten books, but it was undeniably suggestive and seems worthy of being rescued, at least in name and purpose, from the oblivion into which it passed. Absorbed in nearer if not weightier questions, the women of that day gave scant welcome to the theories of Miss Farnham; but the appearance of those theories, even if in rudimentary form, was ominous, though the omen was not recognized. It was one of the first guns of a struggle compared with

which even the war which was then raging was tame and half-hearted, and of which the end is not yet; perhaps never will be.

For the time, however, the women of our land were concerned with national rather than sexual questions. Indeed, the physiological argument never took root among the theories of women when they discussed their place in the scheme of creation; but the mental argument, the position that women were in all mental attributes equal to men and therefore should be possessed of equal rights, proved to be seed sown in good ground. Time was needed for its development into the grain of general or even partial acceptance; but it grew and was even then growing, even if not directly under the fostering of the author of *Woman and Her Era*.

Already there had been more than whispers of such theories. As is usually the case, the first movements were clumsy and ill-directed and were too radical to hope for general popularity even among those whom they were intended to benefit. There had been among certain disgruntled women a movement toward "dress reform"—not, however, having as its end æsthetic or even sanitary considerations, but merely an assertion, of strange and even ridiculous nature, of equality with the men. Even before Miss Farnham had uttered her call to battle there had come into existence those strage bifurcated garments called "bloomers," though their adoption had been limited to very few indeed among the women of our land. Moreover, nearly fifteen years prior to the appearance of Miss Farnham's book, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton had signed a summons to the first "Woman's Rights" convention, which was held at the home of Mrs. Stanton, at Seneca Falls, New York. On this occasion was made the first formal claim for suffrage on the part of women;

but the movement accomplished little and was rather suggestive than effective.

The female suffragists had accomplished nothing at this time; they had not even influenced the general thought of their sex, and such works as that of Miss Farnham—the most radical and yet representative in its theories and therefore selected as typical—were as few as ineffective. The failure of the movement to spread beyond a few rabid enthusiasts was doubtless because of its radicalness of theory; it was not content, being in this respect like almost all new movements, to make gradual progress, but must upset established institutions, both domestic and political, at a blow. Therefore it won from all sensible people either ridicule or neglect; it made no more real headway than had the sporadic outbursts of misdirected religious enthusiasm in older times, which indeed it greatly resembled in its methods and propagandists. Its central theory was so overlaid by cumbering cloaks of absurdity that, whatever might be its real attractions and merits if seen stripped of its fantastic garb, it could but be repugnant in present guise to all true womanhood; it was sent forth in "bloomers," as it were, and was thus made a figure of fun and deprived of the dignity which it might have held had its dress been simple and dignified. Yet it was portentous, though the portent was not of the thing that was seen but of that which was to be born of it.

Such radical "reformers" as Susan B. Anthony, with her adoption of semi-masculine costume, just sufficiently masculine to render it unfeminine and nothing more, or Lucretia Mott, with her impracticable theories of "women's rights," presented in such form as to be repellent to all the better attributes of true womanhood, could win but ridicule, good-natured or acrimonious, as their portion; yet, in a sense, they were the leaders of the great

movement which in altered guise was to come as a preponderant question of its day. Not in 1866, however, had that movement taken or even promised to assume any definite shape or one likely to win sufficient adherents to make it worthy of notice. As yet American womanhood was content with its sphere. It still ruled the home, and found in that rule all of "right" that it desired. It was content to send to the polls, as to the battle, its male representatives and to guide them by its influence into the paths which seemed best. It did not "lift up its voice and contend in the streets"; it was quietly strong.

The close of the Civil War, then, found the outer conditions of the American woman, speaking of them in general and not as affected by the material results of that war, just as they had been at the beginning of the strife. Society had indeed been rent into fragments; but the components of that society which had flourished four years before were unchanged in their status. Socially speaking, there had come no change to the women of America during the period of the Civil War; yet by that war and its results there had been created conditions that were to bear fruit in after days.

Chapter XIII

Feminine Reconstruction

XIII

FEMININE RECONSTRUCTION

DURING the era which is generally known in the political history of our country as the "Reconstruction Period," there came about many and significant changes in the status and thought of the women of our land, particularly in the Southern portion thereof. It was a period of honest error on the part of those who guided the destinies of the nation, and the errors made by them, largely founded on the old base of misunderstanding of actual conditions, reacted upon the womanhood of the South and prolonged the sectional animosity which still held its place of prejudice and bitterness in our midst. Justice of judgment, as far as applied to national issues and affairs, was unknown; hence, amelioration of existent conditions, always the work of wise and tolerant public opinion, was impossible. During that period the South, and with it its women, passed through greater stress and suffering than even the days of the Civil War had brought upon it.

In the North there were no such hampering conditions to development, therefore there was progress in all social matters. Society, as generally termed, became re-formed and settled down to its old pursuits and ambitions; but there had come a great difference in its conditions. The era of centralization which had dawned with the close of the Revolution had again passed away. Never again, as

far as we can see and foresee, was Washington to be the social centre of the country. The traditions of the White House had been overthrown, and the leadership of the social world was not to be looked for from that quarter as of old. For the future, the mistress of the White House might be in theory "the first lady of the land," but she was no longer to be at the head of a court or even a coterie. The social glory of Washington had departed. Society resumed its ways all over our country; but when American women were spoken of there was no longer in the mind of speaker or listener the inevitable suggestion of the social world as generally recognized. The term had emerged from its narrowness of meaning and had resumed all its old inclusiveness; North and South, East and West, it was recognized that American womanhood includes society, and not society American womanhood. And this recognition of a great truth helped the coming of a new era which was hard at hand.

Meanwhile, America was two countries, joined in a force-born alliance but with no true union, far less unity. And of all the manifestations of this deplorable fact, none was so convincing as the bearing of our womankind in their attitude toward those of the opposite section. The women of the South steadfastly refused to be "reconstructed." The same feeling was prevalent among the men of that section; but it was at its height among the women, who utterly refused to pretend to any feeling of loyalty to the Union, and, worse yet, did not affect to conceal their hatred of all things Northern. Among the evils which Reconstruction had brought in its train was the advent in the South of a type of Northern woman, entirely honest in her enthusiasm in the cause of the negro and entirely ignorant of the true methods to further that cause. She came armed with a thousand ill-founded

prejudices, and she calmly proceeded to work upon the lines suggested by those prejudices, with utter disregard of the real conditions which she desired to ameliorate and with dense ignorance of the true tendencies and nature of the people, white and black, among whom she worked. Lacking the long line of racial traditions and experiences which alone could give grasp of the situation, she took council of her preconceived ideas only, and from her darkness of ignorance and prejudice believed that she could shed light into benighted souls. She was honest to a fault; but her honesty was based in the supreme folly which believes that it can better see into the nature of things than they to whom those things have been life-long conditions. Seeing her, the Southern woman naturally believed that she was a type of the womanhood of the North,—which she was not. Hearing her reports, written from a standpoint utterly fatal to their truth or even fairness, of the existent culture in the conquered country, the Northern woman believed that her accounts gave a true picture of the conditions of civilization and thought prevailing in the South,—which they did not. So increased the poison of misunderstanding in the veins of both sections.

The Southern woman was rebellious; the Northern woman was intolerant. Were the women alone to be consulted, there was small hope of ever fusing into one the severed elements which theoretically composed the nation. And yet, because of conditions arising from the deplorable state of things which then existed, the women were to become, though only gradually and not of set purpose, the dominating constituents in such fusion. The mills of the gods were grinding and the grist was to prove of sustenance to the country in unlooked-for ways. Before following to its end the movement which began in want and need, however, it may be well to cast a glance at

the conditions which gave to that movement its rise and direction.

Not only had the South become deeply impoverished as a result of the long struggle and of the loss of its slaves, but it was suffering from many of the evils which the cooler heads among statesmen, North and South, had foreseen as the result of the sudden emancipation of the negroes. Moreover, there had been imported into the Southland a most undesirable element in the persons and families of those who were contemptuously termed "carpet-baggers," and these were, unhappily, in the ascendant in matters political and wished to become so in matters social. It was a time of the rule of the *demos* in its worst form—the *demos* which has broken loose from restraint and has turned upon its former masters as its natural prey. As a consequence of all these things, society as once known did not exist in the South. The social element was of course present and recognized; but it was unable to find expression in its wonted manner. The man who once had lived upon the labors of his dependents was now forced to earn his own bread, generally in scanty quantity, by his own work, manual or mental; and his wife, who had once glittered resplendent in the social circle and had found her every desire as well as need supplied almost as quickly as formed, was now compelled to assume even more than the normal duties of the typical housewife and to bend all her energies toward eking out the small subsistence which her husband was able to provide. Naturally, under such uncongenial circumstances, there was little thought of social gathering or function, except in a very few of the larger towns, which refused to abandon their ways because of poverty. Such a town was New Orleans, with its brilliant circles of Creoles. In general, however, there was no attempt to emulate the gaiety of the capital

of Louisiana; the women of the South faced with courage the conditions which were imposed upon them, but they could not make merry in their sadly altered circumstances.

In the North the effects of the war were of course less severely felt; but still there were effects detrimental to the interests of society as generally understood. Many a home had lost its chief worker and felt the sting of poverty as a consequence. The war had cost the North great treasure of money as well as blood, and the cost, while never thought of with a pang of regret, was often present to the consciousness of the people who bore its results. There was less impulse of gaiety among all classes; there was a graver trend of thought than ever before, and there was the recognition of past peril and present loss. These changes affected the women more than the men. The latter indeed felt but little of the detrimental consequences of the war, for the most part taking up their lives where they had temporarily put them aside to spend themselves in the service of their country. The women, however, where they felt the stress at all, felt it severely. Aside from their stricken hearts, there were problems of everyday life presented to them which clamored for solution, if that life were not to be made worse than a burden. In far better case than their sisters of the South, they yet had sufficient cause for gravity of thought and call of courage. Many were the fortunes that had been made during the war by Northern men who battened upon the needs of their country; but the more diffused loss of sustenance more than overbalanced even these fortunes and swayed the scale to the side of loss instead of gain in the totality of result.

Before considering the results which accrued from these conditions, North and South, it may be interesting to turn aside for a moment to make record of one of the most picturesque figures among American womanhood of that

day, even though her fame was but local. About 1815 there was born in the city of Baltimore, of Irish parentage, an infant who was named Margaret Gaffney. She married young, and in 1836 went with her husband, whose name was Haughery, to New Orleans. Left a penniless widow in less than a year, she entered into the service of the city orphan asylum as a domestic, and when the second building was erected the Sisters, finding her faithful and intelligent, placed her in charge of the large dairy which was a part of the establishment. Soon she became associated with all the labors of the Sisters and by her efforts materially contributed to free the establishment from debt. When this had been done she opened a dairy on her own account, and in 1866 added a bakery to her business. She made money with a rapidity which was accountable only by the wide celebrity which she had gained by her labors in the cause of the orphans, for she was known far and wide as "Margaret, the Orphans' Friend." She retained the simplicity of her thought and life throughout, herself driving the cart by means of which her bread and milk were distributed, and all the money that she made was contributed to the cause of the forsaken children whom she loved. She died in 1882, and to her was erected the first monument to a woman ever reared in the United States. As the first woman to be thus honored she deserves to be remembered by more than local affection; and it speaks well for our country that the pioneer shaft raised to a woman did not commemorate the triumphs of intellect or even militant bravery, but the labors and unselfishness of one who could not so much as write her name, signing with a cross the will by which she made her last gift to the orphans—Protestant as well as Catholic, for her large soul knew of them nothing but that they were in need of care—of the city of New

Orleans. Even yet, in these days of rush and bustle, New Orleans has not forgotten the woman whom it knew by the simple name of "Margaret," neglecting further identification of title; for to New Orleans there was but one Margaret, and the name carried unique meaning, even as would that of a reigning queen.

To return from this substitution of the individual for the general: Reconstruction, in a political sense, was happily of brief life in the South; but Feminine Reconstruction, which had its birth in the same time as the political, was destined to prove lasting in its work and effects. There was need of complete reconstruction, of thought as well as society, if woman were not to be a clog rather than an aid to the efforts of man; for the conditions which had enabled the latter, at least in the South, to look upon woman as the companion only for his leisure had disappeared, while in both sections there were left destitute thousands of women, with mouths which must be fed, both of themselves and of little ones. Moreover, in both sections the home was no longer the inevitable and perfect refuge which it had been. Either the father, the breadwinner, had been swept away by the destroying tide of war, together with the brothers upon whom the home might still have leaned, or he was so disabled in body or purse that he could not care for those who by nature were dependent upon him. These conditions did not press so heavily upon the Northern homes, since in that section there was plenty of work for willing hands and the men had little difficulty in obtaining a sufficient living for their households; but in the South those conditions were widespread. They were imperative in their instant demands; they must be satisfied; but how?

Only one answer met the necessities of the case; the women must work. For themselves, and often for their

households, they must win support; the young girls, just verging upon womanhood, must go out from the homes where they had been so carefully and tenderly nurtured and face the battle for independence. It is difficult for us in these days of broader thought to understand the horror with which the women of the South contemplated this necessity. For a woman of the "upper classes"—and it must be remembered that, in the South, there was practically no middle class at that period—to labor for money was, in the eyes of the Southern lady, reared in all the prejudices and traditions of affluence, a real degradation. For herself she might have borne it uncomplainingly, as she had borne so many other hardships; but for her daughters it was terrible in her thought. To guard them from the rough touch of the world had been one of her first duties; now she must learn to fit them, if possible, for that contact, she must send them out to fight for their hands in the strife of existence. Elder as well as younger women were thus forced to fight; but it was for the latter, not for themselves, that the elders felt the stress. They had learned in hard schools to endure; but their daughters had been shielded as well as might be even in the nearest coming of hardship and peril, and they could not bear the thought of removing from those daughters their watchful and tender care.

The younger women themselves faced the situation with more courage; but that they were daunted by the prospect cannot be denied. They were eager to contribute to the support of those who had thus far cherished them; they grudged no pain of labor to effect this end; but they recoiled from the actual going out into the world, alone and unaided, to meet its coarseness and lack of sympathy. Yet, the need once acknowledged and proved, they met it firmly. They still retained some prejudices as to the

limits within which it was possible for a lady to labor and retain her claim to the title she valued; they had not at a bound attained to the independence of thought and action which is a mark of womanhood in the days in which we of the present live; but they were ready to do all that within those limits fell to their hands, if so they might relieve their parents of part of the burden which weighed so heavily upon them.

Thus, in the pangs of bitter necessity, was born among women the era of the worker. It was an era which was to last to the present and to reach into the future as far as the eye of prophecy can penetrate; but, like all infants, it was feeble at birth and even its first steps were tottering and uncertain. The beginnings of the true Feminine Reconstruction were made under stress of circumstance and not of choice; but they were none the less admirable in result, though slower in attaining thereto. This was the fruit of the Civil War, its great gift to the womanhood of our land. That fruit first blossomed in the South, since here there was the greater need; and her daughters went out from their homes into the crowded marts of business and claimed a share in the work of men. Not at first; indeed, the more radical impulse in this wise came from the North, where also conditions had changed since the first half of the century. The Southern girl saw but little proper direction for her efforts beyond the profession of education; she went out as teacher or governess, and considered that thus she had reached the uttermost bourne of possibility in this wise. But the educational circle became so thronged that on its margin, vainly endeavoring to enter, stood a countless throng of girls and women who must work or be a burden upon those they loved, if even this shameful refuge was open to them. So perforce they turned away, battling with their prejudices, to seek other

employment; and when they had found it they discovered to their relief and delight that they had gained rather than lost caste in the eyes of the world, even of their own circles.

Under varying conditions but to similar purpose, there was an equal movement among Northern womanhood. Timidly at first, for they too had their prejudices to conquer, the women of the North sought to enter into the great competition for the means of existence; and, having once tasted independence, they found it sweet. There was almost the same hesitancy and the same circumscription of womanly calling in the North as in the South; but the Northern woman, with her stronger sense of independence in right-doing, sooner shook herself free from the shackles of tradition. Had there been equal need in both sections, the North would doubtless have taken and maintained the lead in the emancipation of women from the servitude of the obligations of caste as in those days held; but because of the greater incentive among the women of the South these were in the van in the new movement until that movement became so general that there was no longer front or rear thereto. That time was not long in coming; revolutionary as were its theories, the country had long unconsciously been prepared for them, and when they were set up they were almost universally acknowledged as the proper standard. There still remained some whose prejudices in this respect were irrefragable, but they gradually found themselves in a constantly weakening minority. The worker in the hive of humanity found herself not only tolerated, as she had hoped as the best possible, but honored, even more than the queen bees; she found herself, though originally forced there by circumstances, in an environment which was in all ways congenial to the best of her nature. Not a little of this result, it must

be proudly admitted, was owing to the chivalry of the American man. With all respect, as all courtesy, he welcomed to participation in his pursuits the woman whom he had looked upon as by training and even nature cut off from such participation, and he gladly embraced the opportunity to prove to the women of the land that his deference for their sex was not limited to the bounds of the drawing room, but was a thing which was unlimited in application. With their contact with the world of affairs thus made easy for them by those upon whose hitherto exclusive territory they were intruding, the women of America found their new life not only tolerable but pleasant.

That "the ages call and heroes come" has risen to the dignity of an apothegm; but if "inventions" were substituted for "heroes" in the saying it would be at least as true and perhaps of more practical value and meaning. It does not appear that the typewriter has ever been mentioned as one of the determining factors of our present feminine status, but that it deserves such credit does not admit of a doubt. That invention, whose use is now so nearly universal that it is difficult to remember that it has been with us but a scant twenty years, came at the psychological moment in the history of American womanhood. It opened, as nothing else, an avenue for the direction of feminine effort in the struggle for existence; and it displayed its possibilities just at the period when the supply of women workers began far to exceed the demand. There were still recognized limitations to female effort,—far straiter than those now laid down, if indeed any limitations, other than those drawn by physical conditions can be said now to exist. As formerly in educational circles, so now in those of affairs there was overcrowding among the women who sought work; and just in time to relieve the stress there was opened a new field of labor, peculiarly

adapted to the feminine nature and need, in the manipulation of the novel instrument of record. Quickly was the field seized and cultivated by the eager women; and it not only was itself rich in harvest, but it led into new and hitherto uncultivated fields of effort, and from the time of the acceptance of the typewriter as a necessity of business, the position of women in the world of affairs was assured and established.

Before the nineteenth century had passed the eighth mile-stone of its existence the foundation of Feminine Reconstruction had been laid in enduring material, and each succeeding lustrum saw the edifice arise in fairer and more definite proportions. So accustomed to the new status of women did we soon become that we failed to recognize how radical was the change which had taken place in the general conception of the sphere of womanhood. The very fact that there was no definite and determined movement looking to the desired end made for success. The woman worker did not come with demand for equality of recognition, with parades and conventions and speeches; she simply entered upon the field which she desired to possess, and made it her own by right. Therefore that right was instantaneously recognized, and there was tacit acceptance, which is the most significant and enduring of all.

Meanwhile, the "reformers" among women had not been idle. In many respects true reformation had taken place: legislation had from time to time assured women of equal rights in property—in some respects had even recoiled to the opposite extreme and had given to the married woman, whose property was once entirely under the control of her husband, immunity from just responsibilities and made her lot in this respect far more enviable and secure than that of the man whose rights she shared.

Though somewhat too radical in effect, the spirit of these things was admirable, and women had cause for self-gratulation upon the success of their efforts to be safeguarded and recognized in their just claims. Had the efforts of the "reformers" stopped here there could have been but praise for their work and its aims; but this was not the case. More and more insistent became the cry for equal footing with the men in matters which were not generally deemed within the sphere of femininity. The advocates of female suffrage in particular uplifted their voices and would not cease their clamor, though disowned by a majority of their own sex. Near the beginning of the tenth decade of the century a large number of the women of Massachusetts, to show their lack of sympathy with the radicals, even formed themselves into a "Ladies' Anti-Suffrage League." Yet even this open enmity to their cherished schemes among those who were most concerned did not deter the "reformers." In 1884, when political excitement reached its post-bellum height, Mrs. Belva Lockwood, a female practitioner of law in Washington, actually announced her candidacy for the presidential chair; and though she did not ultimately go to the poll, she took the stump in her own behalf and in all other respects emulated the male candidates for the chief magistracy. This was the climax of feminine effort in politics and doubtless had its deterrent effect in making disciples to the theory of female suffrage.

Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a type of her class. Born in 1815, and living until 1902, nearly the whole of her long life was devoted to the promulgation and attempt to establish theories of feminine equality with men in all respects of "rights." She was one of those restless spirits which find in fanaticism of some kind their needful expression, and she was never weary of the notoriety and prominence

that accrued from her efforts for the "emancipation" of women. Her share in the first "Woman's Rights" convention has already been mentioned. In 1854 she addressed the New York legislature on the subject of the rights of married women, and in 1860 she again appeared in the halls of law as an advocate for divorce on the grounds of drunkenness. In 1867 she canvassed Kansas, and in 1874 Michigan, when the question of female suffrage was submitted to the decision of the people of those States. In 1868 she was actually a candidate for a seat in Congress on the platform of female suffrage, and though she failed in gaining a place in the legislature of the nation she subsequently appeared many times before that legislature, or committees thereof, in behalf of her cherished theory. These efforts, together with her incumbency of numerous presidencies in societies and leagues in sympathy with her purposes, made up the sum of her existence. Personally she was a woman of many attractions of mind and bearing; but her fanaticism in the fancied cause of those who repudiated, in their vast majority, her theories and aims made her the type of the restless and radical "reformer."

Yet the efforts of the would-be female reformers, however, misdirected in their immediate aims, did good in rousing the women of America to a consideration of their place in the polity, at least in social matters, of the commonwealth. They might not care to go to the polls and struggle with the men in an endeavor openly to rule the destinies of the nation; but they awoke to a more intelligent interest than they had yet displayed in the theories of government and the social questions of the day. Many of the chief reforms in these matters which have come about during late years have been effected by the direct influence of the women of our land, either in leagues or

through recognized and accredited representatives of some accepted theories. This feminine interest in the larger affairs of the nation, rightly directed to internal rather than to external policy, has been admirable in its results, and its rise and development may in large measure be attributed to the incitement of the reform spirit in other matters. That the concerted efforts of the women of our country are invariably wisely directed and governed it were folly to claim; but the spirit is always pure and high, and the masculine framers or advocates of legislation are not of such unimpeachable wisdom that they can afford to speak in scorn of the theories or work of the other sex in this wise, while at least the motives that direct feminine influence cannot be called into question. The tendency of the sex toward extremes, and its blindness, in its sense of the desirability of its end, to the unwisdom of the means which it sometimes proposes to use, are occasionally in evidence in matters of paternal legislation, but these are but minor flaws, and are not incorrigible.

So the era of Feminine Reconstruction resulted in the working woman and the thinking woman; and on these lies much of the hope of our country's future. Thus the Civil War at the last brought us a blessing instead of a curse, and in the halls of labor American womanhood once more joined hands in amity and became a unit in its aims and influence.

Chapter XLV

The Close of a Century

XIV

THE CLOSE OF A CENTURY

WHEN a German woman residing in a Western city, but recently arrived in America from the midst of the conservative social circles of her native land, described American women at large as *furchtbar frei und furchtbar fromm* [frightfully free and frightfully pious], she unintentionally paid a compliment to our feminine civilization. The accusation of piety calls for no rebuttal; and that of freedom was caused by the confounding, as was natural in European thought, of innocent simplicity with recklessness of deportment. The social manners of American women of the present is a subject of philosophy rather than history; but the fact of the freedom of intercourse between the sexes may be touched upon, since, however strange and reprobatory it may seem to European eyes, it is as much a national "institution" as our form of government itself, while its causes lie in the story of the past.

The opening of the vast treasures of the West, and the marvellous development of that section, had effect upon the direction of feminine thought and effort in various channels. Though the leaps of that part of our country into prominence had made of such places as Chicago and St. Louis, as well as lesser but still important cities of the West, a potent influence in the development of material

interests long before the century had entered upon its ninth decade, until that time they had won but little power as social influences. They were fast taking their places as powers in this direction also, however, and before long Chicago at least came to be recognized as a stalwart rival to New York, the acknowledged leader of the East in things social. Then, because of the lusty strength incidental to the vigorous youth of the junior members of our commonwealth, Western ideas and influences began to be felt in the East and to modify the conditions that existed in Eastern society.

The simplicity [freedom] of which the German woman complained is in truth one of the finest, as of the most characteristic, traits of our social system in its regulation of intercourse between the sexes, and it was well that the East, which was beginning to pay too much attention to the ultraconservative ideas of the Old World in this respect, should find a counter influence within the borders of its own land. Even more important, however, was the hearty acceptance by the West—far broader than that of the East—of the theory of woman's place in affairs; though the woman worker had been accepted and even honored in the East, it was not until the West had made her a matter of course that she was universally regarded as entirely within the proper sphere of femininity. Up to that time she had been looked upon as the creature of circumstances, to disappear when the conditions of her existence were altered, rather than as an established fact; but the last decade of the century swept away such remaining cobwebs of tradition and for all time made the woman worker a recognized fact as well as factor in the totality of our social system.

As the century drew to its close, increasingly prominent and determined became the position of the woman worker.

Her sphere of action became rapidly enlarged; she grew to be a power as well as an influence. She was no longer of necessity the subordinate worker; often she claimed and obtained a place at the head of affairs, even if as yet these were rarely "of great pith and moment." The woman worker rapidly developed into the woman of business. She began to rival the men in enterprise, even although she rarely contended with them in their traditional fields. Yet even this latter rule was not universal in application; the nineteenth century had not yielded its latest breath before it had seen the appearance of women as commercial travellers, as agents of various descriptions, and in many departments contending with the men for supremacy in fields that had hitherto been considered necessarily confined to cultivation by the sterner sex.

The close of that century also saw women entering into rivalry with the men in learned professions. Female practitioners of medicine, such as Dr. Mary Walker, had been known for some time, and the last few years have seen, even in the most conservative States, women admitted to the bar, following in the footsteps of Mrs. Belva Lockwood, to contend with their male rivals in forensic eloquence and subtleties. The professorial chairs of such institutions of learning as Vassar College, the forerunner of the many splendid educational centres for female training that have sprung up throughout our land, were filled for the most part by women, themselves the product of those educational institutions; and even some of the universities hitherto confined to the education of the male youth of our land opened their doors to women, while coeducation already had its notable strongholds. Everywhere there was granted, and gladly granted, to womanhood all that it asked in concerted demand; "Woman's Rights," as far as claimed by the consensus of womanly

thought, had won all that its advocates could desire in the matter of recognition.

The change came with wonderful suddenness; yet it was so natural in its workings, and the national mind had so long been prepared for it, that it bore with it no sense of strangeness. Such a personality as that of Mrs. Hetty Green, for example, the richest woman in America, financier and woman of affairs, holding directing interests in many large corporations, fostering and guiding some of the greatest enterprises in the world of finance, and doing all of her own responsibility and unaided by advice—such a personality as this would have seemed incredible fifty years ago, but to-day is hardly worthy of more than passing note. The entrance of women into the sphere of business, competing with men upon their own ground, matching their wits against those of their masculine competitors and remaining unworsted in the struggle, excites no remark but is accepted as a thing entirely natural to the conditions of modern life. Yet in its youth the century whose age beheld these things would have maintained, even with acrimony, that they were undesirable impossibilities.

Even some of the extreme demands of the radicals in such matters were granted, at least experimentally, with results which showed the wisdom of the more moderate advocates of "Woman's Rights." A town in Kansas, that stronghold of extreme experiments, placed the whole internal government—mayoralty, town council, and all like offices—in the hands of its women. This was about 1897; and the century had not yet drawn its last gasps when the aforesaid town was found to be bankrupt, while its affairs generally were in such hopeless confusion that the men were, at the next election, hastily called in to repair, as far as possible, the devastation which had been wrought. But if women could not find success in the administration

of civic government, they none the less proved themselves, in more than one notable instance, admirable organizers and administrators in other spheres. It suffices to recall the name of Frances Elizabeth Willard to show what can be accomplished by an able woman working upon lines which her education and sexual traditions fit her to pursue. Miss Willard left behind her noble monuments in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, of which she was president from 1879 until her death, and the World's Christian Temperance Union, founded by her in 1883, and of which she was made president in 1888. She did other work for her sex and humanity in general, and in her educational and journalistic career she proved her abilities and her administrative powers; but these were best and most nobly shown in the fostering of the great temperance movements in whose success she was the most influential factor. Nor is it only by the womanhood of America that the name of Frances Willard is held in honor or will be eternally remembered, though it was in her exposition of some of the highest qualities peculiar to that womanhood that she won her most enduring claim to honor and remembrance.

Another woman's name which before the close of the century had taken place among the foremost of organizers and administrators in work helpful to humanity is that of Clara Barton. Miss Barton served a long apprenticeship in her work before she became its recognized leader on American soil. During the Civil War she did relief work upon the battlefields, succoring with her own hands many a stricken soldier and saving him from a lingering death. Even thus early she displayed her talent for organization by forming a "bureau of information," where inquiries could be made and information lodged concerning missing men. (It was, however, to the Rev. William A. Crocker,

a chaplain in the Confederate service, that the original idea of such a bureau, as well as its foundation and administration, were due.) Later, Miss Barton became associated with the International Red Cross Society, and as one of its members did noble work during the Franco-Prussian War. In 1881 she became president of the American Red Cross Society, the organization of which was mainly due to her personal efforts, and its success to her prestige and direction. Under her administration great good has been done by the Society to suffering humanity, her efforts in this direction not being confined to times of war. Such catastrophes as the Russian famine of 1892 and the Armenian massacres of 1896 won prompt aid from the Red Cross, while not only was relief sent to the suffering Cubans in 1898, but during the subsequent war Miss Barton took personal charge of the hospital service of her Society. Even the Boer War gave her opportunity for humane work, which was eagerly embraced.

If it must be acknowledged that the sex has not as yet, even in world-inclusion, shown itself the equal of its rivals in the matter of literature, it has yet done some work that will live. In poetry it has given us a Sappho, a Vittoria Colonna, an Elizabeth Barrett Browning; in fiction, a George Eliot, a George Sand, a Madame de Staël; in the graver departments of letters, a Harriet Martineau. Neither America in particular nor the present age in general has added to this important list, but in Frances Hodgson Burnett our womanhood has at least given to the present one of its best novelists, and there are on the roll of women writers several who have done work that ranks above the average of the literary production of the day.

Perhaps one of the most characteristic advances of the century at its close was the recognition among womanhood

of duties of a nature till then unacknowledged save by a few, who had made no disciples. There had always been many, to the praise of womanhood be it said, who had been foremost in almsgiving and aid to the needy; indeed, the personal calls of charity had been left almost entirely in the hands of woman as the traditional and natural dispenser of alms. But it was not until the latter days of our civilization, as we now know it, that women became publicly and recognizedly the leaders in the great charitable movements; it was even not until that time that women, in individual guise, became known as philanthropists. Especially is the fact of a rich woman, such as Miss Helen Gould, being prominently identified with benevolent work a product of our own time. There may have been in the past many who gave, and that liberally, but they did not identify themselves and their lives with their charities; they did not give themselves as well as their money. It is less the pecuniary generosity of Miss Gould to worthy objects than her personal identification therewith, her gift of part of her life to such objects, that is worthy of commemoration; and in her way she stands a type of the later American woman. When she gave the munificent sum of one hundred thousand dollars—but a portion of her total contribution—to the work of the hospital service at the beginning of the war with Spain, she did something, yet hardly achieved rivalry with a certain widow of Scriptural fame; but when, at Camp Wikoff, she nursed with her own hands the sick soldiers of her country she brought to her gift of money the far finer gift of her own personality, and thus added to the former in infinite degree. It is well for our country that we can claim that such as she are but types.

It is one of the rightful boasts of America that, although she has been vehemently accused of making the "Almighty

Dollar" her one god, she has always been ready with generous response to the call of need. It mattered not whence that call came; Ireland, Russia, India, Cuba were alike recipients of her bounty, full to overflowing, when they raised their voices in anguish. That the answer to the cry for help was so quick, so hearty, so satisfying, was in large degree the work of our womanhood, whose ears were ever attuned to the voice of suffering. This was so almost from the birth of America as a nation; but only of late has the answer from our women to such cries for help been organized and, therefore, really effective. This apart, however, it may be claimed that one of the enduring attributes of American womanhood—more so than of any other race—is its generosity and response to the call of humanity, uncaring for race or creed or any outward circumstance. Many of the organized efforts in this wise of later days have been but the expressions of the national spirit of generosity, first finding congenial direction and resultful methods. It is no new thing that American womanhood should give of its substance to the cause of humanity; the newness lies entirely in the more concentrated methods of such gift, directed along the most effective lines and thus escaping that diffusion and waste which is common to unorganized effort. That this result has been reached we owe chiefly to the leaders among the woman's movement in this direction toward the close of the past century.

The present era of American womanhood, indeed, may be classified as supremely that of concentration. Throughout our country are constantly springing up women's societies having definite aims and purposes, and the effort which was formerly diffused, and therefore unavailing, now tends from a consolidated source to a clearly discerned end. Whether for purposes of amelioration of sex-position or of general

beneficence, women have learned the power which lies in concentration of effort and have penetrated the secret of the most effectual putting forth of the strength which lies in them. Organization among women is a thing of the last few decades, but already it has assumed such proportions that feminine influence, not individually but collectively asserted, sways the destinies of our nation in more ways than are perceptible to the casual observer. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, for example, was strong enough to procure the abolishment of the army canteen, even against the influence of the most powerful men in the army itself. That Congress, as a body, was in favor of the action is a belief which would find few thoughtful supporters; yet Congress gave the Temperance Union the legislation it desired, and that with but little opposition. In seeking the cause for this we touch the secret of the great power which is admittedly swayed by our feminine organizations, a power far greater than that belonging to any cognate ones of masculine membership. The secret is this: because of the purity and height of their aims, the councils of the women of our country have as ally that greatest of all influences, public opinion. Moreover, this public opinion always looks to the great end in view and but little to the wisdom of the proposed means to that end; therefore, it supports any movement which tends toward an amelioration of public morality, as in the example cited, even where the movement takes a direction which is too radical to effect its proper ends. Therefore, the womanhood of our country, as organized and concentrated, holds to-day in its hands a power which it must exercise with discretion and moderation, or there will result from its unregulated exertion chaos and cataclysm; yet a power which, properly exerted, will tend ever to the positing of higher standards of morality and nobler goals of power, and

generally to the upward as well as the onward march of our nation and kind.

There is in all this access of power and influence a danger which it is well to recognize and face,—the danger of hysteria. This is in many respects a hysterical age, and neither sex can claim immunity from this dread disease. There are many organizations and movements, masculine as well as feminine, which have their birth and tendency in nothing else than hysteria, and there are others, admirable in inception and purpose, of which the conduct is governed largely by this emotional influence. The feminine sex is far more prone to unthinking enthusiasm than is the masculine, and they have given proof of this in many instances. Often, beginning some new movement with admirable and definite aims, our womanhood allows itself to be carried beyond its legitimate purpose by the urging of undisciplined emotion, and thus brings its proper aim and purpose into disrepute among those who judge of a theory by the sub-theories of its disciples. A minor example of this error may be found in the support accorded the axe-wielding termagant by women of pure aims but misdirected energies and enthusiasms. That a crusade such as that led by Carrie Nation could result in nothing but disrepute and scorn for the tenets they cherished was beyond their scope of vision; all that they could see was the attempted end. In the disregard of the character of means so that the end be good lies a peril which, if not subdued, may bring to naught all the noblest efforts of our womanhood in the twentieth century. Unless the tendency to hysteria be eliminated, the result cannot be that which the effort deserves.

Perhaps the most defined and significant feminine movement which flowered—it had long before blossomed—at the death of the past century is that which is generally

termed "the higher education of women." While this movement is not peculiar to America, it is in this country that it first gave signs of florescence and has taken deepest root. Over the length and breadth of the land are constantly springing up new educational centres which are devoted to the culture of young women. When Vassar began its career, it was, as Girton in England, looked upon as a most doubtful experiment, both as to its permanency and the merit of its aims; now it is but one of an ever-increasing many, while coeducation is now an established rule in many of our greatest institutions of learning. There are still dissentients from the theory of classical and scientific education for women, and it is somewhat singular that the movement should have obtained full headway at the very time when there has been sharp and sustained attack upon university education for men as an aid to future career; but in neither case can the opponents of liberal education be said to have prevailed in argument. That errors have been made in the progress of the movement for broader feminine culture cannot be successfully denied; occasionally, as in the adoption of the purely masculine badges of cap and gown, cause has been given for more or less good-natured ridicule and charge of fashion rather than earnestness in the movement. Nor can the introduction of athletic contests into the female curriculum be heartily defended; not only are such contests abrogative of the most cherished theories of feminine culture, but they are not productive of respect from the enemies of the movement. The remarkable spectacle has been presented of "championship" games of basketball which ended in fights between the adverse collegiates that recall the days when a baseball match was merely the preliminary to a battle between the partisans of the respective clubs, led by the players. Gracefully to accept defeat is not the

nature of womankind, and struggles for physical mastery among them are subversive of all that is most admirable in the feminine nature. Nevertheless, all these things are but excrescences and not germane to the main theory, and they will doubtless correct themselves by the constant self-evidence of their absurdity or evil tendencies. The promoters of the movement did not look to an aping of masculine garb and pursuits as the end or even means of their purposes, and their original aim will emerge from the mists and shine clear and bright in its height and singleness. That aim was that woman should be placed upon a level with man in all that is most desirable as a foundation for a career, and no one can dispute its excellence of theory. The methods of obtaining the best results in that purpose may be debated and, it is possible, the conclusion reached that not yet have the guides of the army of feminine culture found the shortest and least-encumbered path to their goal, but that the goal will in time be reached by the easiest and best way does not admit of a doubt; in this case at least, though with some difference of application, may be quoted the old French proverb: *Ce que femme veut, Dieu veut.*

That the future of our country depends, as its past has largely depended, upon its women is but a truism; it is something more, however, that we can look forward with calm confidence to that future as upheld by American womanhood. To-day the American woman stands but on the threshold of her career. Behind her are noble traditions, fraught with lesson, with admonition, and in some cases with warning; before her are the coming centuries, pregnant with possibility, to be made her own. Every step that she takes is a determination of her destined path; even though the step be temporarily in advance, if it leads to no worthy goal it is force wasted, and worse.

She must needs face responsibility, without which she would be but the toy which she rightfully refuses to be considered; yet the responsibility which lies on her shoulders should make her thoughtful and grave to meet and outface many problems of existence, to the solution of which she must in largest part contribute by her dealings with them. She is free with the noblest of freedoms; she has the liberty to *be* as well as to *do,* and the former is the greater thing. That which she does is but the reflex of that which she is, and the latter is the determining factor in the result of civilization. It is for her to direct the steps of progress, less in material matters than in spiritual direction; the legislation which is enacted in the halls of our legislatures is but the consequence of the influence and even the teachings of the home, and the face of the land is ever turned in the direction toward which its women set their countenances. There lies before us grave peril in questions of social nature, and it is our women who will determine whether the peril is to prove fatal to the best interests of civilization or but a "stepping-stone to higher things."

The story of American womanhood in the past shows deep cause for pride in those who can boast kinship to that womanhood, and the future will not blur the blazon of the past.

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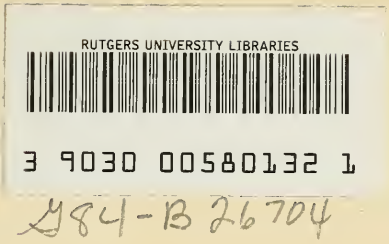
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